D. 12. 34.
67 +. 51. 20

THE FOLLOWING OF CHRIST. IN FOUR BOOKS

WRITTEN BY

JOHN GERSEN,

ABBOT of *VERCELLES*,

OF THE HOLY ORDER OF

St. BENEDICT:

Drawn out of Ten Ancient Manuscripts; some written above four hundred years ago, and set forth by the famous Abbot *Cajetan*, Chronologist to *PAUL* the V. and dedicated to Him; and printed at *Rome*, with Approbation, and general Acceptation, 1644.

Printed at *London*, *Anno Dom.* 1673.

Vanitie of vanities & all is vanitie. Eccl: 1.2.
but onlie to follow and love God.

D. 12. 34.
67 f. 57. 20

THE FOLLOWING OF CHRIST. IN FOUR BOOKS WRITTEN BY *JOHN GERSEN*, ABBOT of *VERCELLES*, OF THE HOLY ORDER OF *St. BENEDICT*:

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2157:08

TO

OUR MOST HOLY FATHER,

PAUL the V. Pope;

Don Conſtantine *Abbot* Cajetane, *his Chronologiſt, wiſheth everlaſting happineſs.*

THE abundance and multitude (moſt Holy Father) of moſt eminent men in all kind of virtue, is ſo great and numberleſs, which

the Religion of that moſt holy Father of Monks, St. *Benedict*, hath produced and brought forth; that, it is not in the power of man to number them, but of Almighty *God* only: *Who alone number's the ſtars, and calls them by their names.*

And to ſay truly, if we lift up our eyes from this valley of miſery, and ſink of death, to behold that bleſſed country, which is the ſeat of happineſs, and the abode of eternity; we forthwith behold an Army of ſhining Martyrs, a praiſ-worthy number of Confeſſors, a glorious company of Virgins,

Virgins, of the great St. *Benedict*'s Children, amongſt the Quires of thoſe, praiſing and glorifying *God*. It is not neceſſary in this place to particularize. For, To what end is it to uſe a long diſcourſe of a thing well known to all? And, if I ſhould attempt it, the diſcourſe would never have an end.

Yet if any prudent eſteemer of things, weighing the high merits of this Religious Order, ſhould give it that ſacred Elogy, *Multæ filiæ congregaverunt divitias, Tu ſupergreſſa es univerſas: Many daughters have gathered together riches, Thou*

haſt ſurpaſſed them all; perchance, he ſhould not much erre from the truth. If notwithſtanding we have wherein to glory, let us not ſwerve from the glory of the Apoſtles (as our St. *Bernard* admoniſheth us) wherein there is nothing lofty, nothing vain.

There are truly ſeveral families, Religious in Gods Church, wherein every one hath their Prerogatives; yet this praiſe is proper and peculiar to St. *Benedict*'s Order, *To have laboured more than them all.*

We, in this, ſay nothing that is inſolent or unbeſeeming religious modeſty: we avouch

avouch not the merit, but the labour; let all have equal merit, the ſame condition; as well thoſe that came to work the firſt hour of the day, as thoſe who came at the laſt; yet it cannot be denyed but that the Children of St. *Benedict*, who have cultivated the field of the Church more than 1100 years with ſo great a number of workmen, muſt have labour'd more than others.

Their labours are not unknown, neither do they ſtand in need of others teſtimony; for, even the numerous Monaſteries, and goodly Churches,

as well in *Italy* as other Countries of the Chriſtian world, erected by our Anceſtors, do ſufficiently proclaim how much we have, and do yet labour for the ſalvation of mankind: yea, *our Lord hath ſent others to reap what ours have ſown.*

But, in truth, we do not ſo much regard the having furniſhed the Church, with ſo many failing and decaying Walls, as we do the having adorn'd it with Works which ſhall laſt for ever.

I will ſay nothing of *Dionyſius Exiguus*, *Romanus Arator*, *Ennodius* Biſhop of *Pavy*, and

and *Anſelmus Caſſiodorus*, with the Maſters and Doctors of the Academies of the Roman Church, *Lateran* and *Vatican*, or *Canton*.

I now omit *Gregory* the Great, *Iſidore*, *Ildefonſe*, *Bede*, *Damaſcene*, *Alcuine*, *Raban*, *Hayman*, *Damian*, *Anſelm*, *Bruno*, *Signius*, *Rupert*, *Bernard*; and chiefly Saint *Benedict* himſelf, that great Patriarch and Lawgiver of Monks, repleniſhed with the ſpirit of all the Saints, and his children the holy Abbots; *Placid*, Protomartyr of his ſacred Order, and *Maurus* Confeſſor, Maſters of that heavenly School and godly life.

I ſay nothing now of Saint *Scholaſtick* B. Virgin, ſiſter to that admirable Father St. *Benedict*, the Foundreſs, prime Leader and Mother of the Weſtern part of the world: whoſe ſoul albeit laden with the heavy burden of the Body, accuſtomed her ſelf from her infancy, to heavenly Exerciſes: and, by a ſtrange and unheard-of paſſage, ſeized with no corporal infirmity, but all joyful and alive, penetrated the higheſt heaven in the likeneſs of a Dove.

And now laſtly, I ſay nothing (paſſing over thoſe ſaintly innumerable maleoff-springs of

of the great St. *Benedict*) of thoſe Angelical Saints of the Virginal ſex, inſpired by the *Holy Ghoſt*, *Elizabeth*, *Hildegard*, *Gertrude*, *Mechtild*, and *Licthgard*; who, like thoſe five holy Virgins in the Goſpel, having fill'd their lamps with oyl of all virtues, by word and work enlightned with the fire of the *Holy Ghoſt*, carrying them in their hands, *went joyfully to meet Chriſt their Spouſe, following the Lamb whereſoever he goes.*

And now I come to him, whoſe name, though in former times well known, yet now vulgarly almoſt forgotten,

ten, though the fame and profit of his writings have penetrated all the Countries and Regions of the world.

I ſay *John Gerſen*, Abbot of our Order, and Author of this moſt celebrious Book, *Of the Following of Chriſt.* O good God! how great ſanctity doth ſhine in it! how great a contempt of the world! what a ſublimity of heavenly wiſdom! how excellent a form and diſcipline of life!

Now, if you deſire authority, it hath moſt abundant witneſſes; two Doctors of the Church, and Lights of the Chriſtian world, the Angelical

St.

St. Thomas, and the Seraphical *Bonaventure*, made manifeſtly appear, how much they eſteem'd this Book. *St. Thomas* made uſe of it, for the compoſing of the office of the bleſſed Sacrament of Chriſt's Body, now approved by the Church. *St. Bonaventure* quoted much of it in his Writings. What ſhall I ſay of *Pius V.* Pope, your Holineſſe's Predeceſſor, and St. *Charles Barome*, Cardinal and Archbiſhop, who carried the Book with them, whitherſoever they went. What of *Frederick*, Cardinal and Archbiſhop, the ſame *St. Charles* his Uncle? who, a true

Diſciple

Diſciple of *Gerſen*, avowed to me, this Book not to have been written with terrene Ink; but the divine of the *Holy Ghoſt*, and he ſtill kneeling, not ſitting.

This is the Book, out of which *Paul* the IV. Pope, and the bleſſed Fathers *Ignatius Loyola*, and *Philip Nereus*, ſucking the rules of Religious life, delivered them to the benefit of all good Chriſtians. And *Thomas a Kempis*, famous alſo for doctrin and ſanctity, did ſo much covet the heavenly doctrin therein contain'd, that he was not content to read it in anothers hand, but that he

would

would himſelf tranſcribe it. And laſtly, *Alexander*, Biſhop of *Pavy*, of great ſanctity (to omit many others leſt I ſhould be too tedious) never ſuffer'd it out of his hands.

How much therefore, and how highly, muſt and ought we to eſteem this our *John Gerſen*, Abbot; to whoſe diſcipline ſo many wiſe men ſubmitted themſelves, though, to ſpeak truly, not to *John*, but rather to the Divinity it ſelf; and, that I may ſpeak more plainly, the *Holy Ghoſt*, who delights to live in peaceable and pure ſouls, by this mans mouth, hath laid open to mortal

tal men, *the depth of the riches of the wiſdom of God.* No marvail therefore, if, amongſt all People and Nations, there hath been hitherto ſo great a conteſt about the Author of this Book, every Nation challenging him to it ſelf; as it happened to *Homer*, as Antiquity relates. And, which is more, the People of all Nations have with one conſent ſo conſpired in liking and reverencing this Book, that now a days there is none can be ignorant thereof; for the ſound of it (no leſs than of the Apoſtolical preaching) hath been heard in all Nations; ſince it is evident, that

that the Maſter of this Chriſtian Philoſophy, is now heard to ſpeak to the *Grecians*, *Spaniards*, *French*, *Germanes*, *Engliſh*, *Sarmates*, and Others, and (which is more to be admired) among the *Turks*; every one hearing him ſpeak in their own language.

Wherefore it is well to be hoped, that the name of Chriſt will be propagated; ſince all Nations accord in the liking and reading *The Imitation of Chriſt*. And what then remains there, but that we return to the bleſſed ſtate of the Primitive Church, when there was but one hear, and

one

one ſoul, in the ſame Belief, which had the beginning from the conjunction of all tongues.

And, to conclude (moſt holy Father), I thought good to put forth this Book, reſtored to the *true* Author under your moſt Auguſt name and protection; and this, by good advice, and upon juſt reaſon. For, To whom doth the patronage of truth more properly belong than to the Succeſſor of *St. Peter*, whoſe Seat was placed upon the *Rock of Truth*, which is *Chriſt himſelf*.

And now, I pray you, what Book can be judged more worthy

worthy (the Holy Scriptures only excepted) to be continually in the Pope's hands, and to alleviate his ſollicitous care for all mankind, than that which teacheth the *Imitation of Chriſt*. Our *John Gerſen*, Abbot, may therefore moſt ſecurely appear, warranted by ſo powerful a Protector, and never fear the glory of his labours henceforth to be detracted. God Almighty conſerve your Holineſſe's health for the benefit of his Church. *From Your Apoſtolical Palace the third of the Nones of* June, A. C. 1616.

THE

THE PREFACE TO THE CHRISTIAN READER, Lover of pure Truth.

Here present thee (dear Christian Reader) with the Book commonly known by the name of, The Imitation *or* Following of Christ, *in as simple, pure, and plain English, as I could possibly draw it from it's original* Latin-*fountain; to the end thou mayst* drink with joy, the pure waters flowing out of thy Saviour's Fountain, *Esay.* 12.3. *who promiseth* to give unto him that is thirsty, of the Fountain of the Water

ter of life freely; *that is, as I have here impartially drawn it forth, and delivered it unto thee, without any deſigne of ſelf-intereſt, or deſire thereby to defend that* Faith I *profeſs, or to advance and glorify my own particular ſtate, condition, and vocation, as ſome others ſurely have done, either by drawing out what they found oppoſite to their Tenents, or by forcing the Tranſlation to the fancy of their own humor and calling. Both which vices I have endeavoured carefully to avoid, neither adding any thing, nor diminiſhing; neither forcing the words, nor wreſting them; but permitting the text to its true natural, genuine ſenſe, and ſignification.*

That it now appears in Engliſh, rather'd ſeemingly upon a new Author, is an ancient approoved verity; *which whoſoever ſhall queſtion, and conteſt, may receive full ſatisfaction from*

from the learned Abbot Cajetan, *the Reverend Father* Francis Walgrave, *and other invincible Champions of this undeniable opinion: and surely, for my own part, I am more cleerly ascertaind of this* * Truth *by the serious consideration of the* spirit *wherewith this divine Book is written, than by any verbal arguments; (though they are also most evident, and capable to convince any disinteressed judgment). For, if ever Son had the air, form, feature, countenance, yea the very humor, and* spirit *of his Ancestors; the Author of this* Work *had that of his fore-father,* St. Benedict.

* This liberty may be allowed to a Preface, and hindereth not one from abounding in his own sense.

If you ask, What was the spirit *of St.* Benedict, *and consequently that of his true and natural children? The great St.* Gregory *answereth (He was full of the Spirit of the just*

that

(Greg. l. 2. Dial. cap. 28): *that is, he moſt eminently poſſeſſed all the moſt excellent virtues of all the Saints. And if, deſcending from generals to particulars, you would know wherein the* Benedictine-ſpirit *chiefly conſiſts: It was, and is,* Diſcretion; *which is the very Parent, Preſerver, and Quinteſſence of all virtues: and therefore (as the ſame great Doctor affirms of the glorious* Saint Benedict) He wrote a Rule excelling in diſcretion, *whereby, with* St. Paul, becomming All to All, he might gain all to their Creator. 1 *Cor.* 9.22.

And ſurely the effects of this diſcreet Spirit *have been exceeding wonderful; in that it hath converted almoſt all Nations to* God, *ſo as the* Benedictines *may juſtly ſay, to the major part of Chriſtian People, and particularly to us Engliſh,* Though you have ten thouſand Maſters in Chriſt, yet not many Fathers: for

in Christ Jesus, by the Gospel, we have begotten you, 1 Cor. 4. 15. *in that we first reclaim'd you from idolatrous blindness, to the light of Christianity.*

If you desire to know the further effects of this discreet spirit, *as to the practice of vertue; you need only look upon the multitudes of Saints which it hath sent up to* * *Heaven.*

If you will read it in books, you may peruse the discreet Rule written by St. Benedict *himself, and (to name some for all, since they, all are numberless) the devout works of the great* Saint Gregory, *the melliflnous writings of* St. Bernard, *the spiritual conflict of* Castaniza, *the Ascetick labours of the modern* Blosius *the mystical pieces of our intern contemplative (of later memory)* Father Augustin Baker, *and the heart-piercing sentences of this incompara-*

* 55700. Canonized Saints of St. Benedict's Order.

incomparable Gerſen, *and you ſhall find them all to be repleniſht with this* ſpirit of the juſt, *which conſiſts in the teaching, helping on, and advancing all Chriſtians to perfection, in their ſeveral ways, callings, and conditions, by a ſupereminent manner, method, and efficacy which is not to other writings ſo proper, and peculiar. Yet this is neither by me ſpoken, nor is by any one to be underſtood, as tending to the leaſt undervaluing, of other approved Orders and Profeſſions, now glorioufly flouriſhing in the Church of God: all which we moſt ſincerely reverenſe, and moſt willingly acknowledg them to be eminent, and uſeful Inſtruments (according to their particular way and ſpirit) of promoting the divine honour and ſervice, of propagating piety, & perfection; and of incouraging their neighbours, and the performance of their religious Duties & Devotions.*

And now to come to the motive, * *which occasion'd this Translation. I have formerly written a small Treatise* [*entitled,* This is the gate of our Lord, the Just shall enter by it *Psa.* 117.19.] *as a means to discern, & find out, to continue & persevere in the true faith; which was gratefully accepted by those lovers of* pure Truth, *for whom I prepared it: I did* there *ingage my* * *self, to give them* certain Rules *for the practice of Virtue; which is the other Branch of Christian duty:* (*for a Christian-man's duty* consisteth in Faith and Good works, James. 2. 20.26.) *But, finding my obligation to exceed my ability, and that the performance of that promise was beyond my own power; I conceived it expedient* (*both for* my discharge *and* my friends *satisfaction*) *to beg the cha-*

* The motive of this translation.

* In the conclusion of that Treatise.

charitable assistance of some more able Brother, and to supply my penury out of my neighbour's more plentiful treasury.

When presently this truly religious Monk John Gerſen *(whose profession divesteth him from all propriety in any thing whatsoever) signified unto me, That, if his divine Books of the* Imitation of Christ *(which lay now imprisoned, disguised, and manacled in the English Tongue) were set at liberty (as it was in my power to do it) they might be employ'd to the Glory of God, and the payment of my debt.*

Whereupon, I forthwith embraced his liberal proffer, and made use of his borrowed riches, to supply my want, and satisfy my obligation; setting him at free and full liberty, (without any restraint shackle or disguise); and, permitting him to his natural and genuine scope and course

to the Glory of God, and the Ghoſtly comfort all God-thirſty ſouls. For I hold my ſelf indebted to all, to the wiſe and to the unwiſe, *Rom.* 1.14. *to the Active, and Contemplative, and Mixt; and I conceive this ſacred Book will be ſutable to all ſorts of Vocations, and Diſpoſitions, every one finding here what is proper and expedient for himſelf, as the* Manna, deſcending from heaven *Pſal.*77.24. *reliſhed with all Appetites.*

Here, the hungry may be filled, the Thirſty refreſhed, the Sick cured, the Weak ſtrengthened, the Strong enabled, the Deſolate comforted, thoſe in darknes inlightned, and the Scrupulous reſolved: Here, the Angry may learn to gain Patience, the Patient Tranquillity, the Proud Humility, the Humble Content, the Laſcivious Chaſtity, the Chaſt Purity, the Senſualiſts Temperance, the Temperate

perate Satiety, the Poor Riches, the Rich increaſe in Spirit: And, to conclude all, in a word, All is here found. Come unto me (*ſaith this Book, with our Bleſſed Saviour*) al ye that labour, and are burthened and I will refreſh you. *Mat.*11.28.

The Method of this work is very eaſy, and obvious; for, as it ſtands divided into Four Books, it ayms at Four ſeveral documents.

The Firſt, If we come to Chriſt, we muſt forſake our ſelves. *Mat.*16. 24. *The Second,* we muſt take up his Croſs. *The Third,* we muſt imitate and follow him. *The Fourth,* that we may eat, and drink at his table in his Kingdom. *Luke.*16.24. *Or thus (which is all one, and according to the clear deſigne of the work)*

The Firſt *ſheweth how to forſake and abandon our ſelves and all worldly vanities.*

The

The Second, *informeth us, how the Kingdom of God is within us, and declareth the benefit, and happineſs of intern converſation.*

The Third, *giveth us to underſtand (or rather to feel) the interiour ſpeech, allocution, converſation, and all ſuch like ſecret operations and divine impulſes of Chriſt, with and to the ſoul.*

The Fourth, *furniſheth us with the moſt delicious banquet of Chriſt's* ſacred Body., *whereby our Saviour and the Soul are perfectly united together, to their mutual and unſpeakable delight, and raviſhment.*

As to the manner * *of practice, it may be various, according to the Reader's various diſpoſition, and as every one finds it moſt correſpondent to his own proper grace, and propenſion: And therefore, I ſhall not here preſume to preſcribe any* ſet Rules

* The manner of practice.

Rules *of uſe*; *but conceive it abſolutely neceſſary that every one ſhould endeavour*, (*beſides the reading of the Book*) *to have a* diſcreet Director, *who from time to time* (*or at leaſt once for all, if the perſon be capable*) *may free him from all ſuperfluous ſcruples, clear all his doubts, and reſolve all his difficulties.*

I know a certain devout ſoul which dayly made uſe of this following manner, *of Morning and Evening exerciſe*: First, *he diſtinctly read over one Paragraph of the Book* (*in the order there couched, even from the firſt to the laſt, from the beginning to the end*) *for his ſpiritual repaſt and contentment.* Secondly, *he, endeavoured to chew and* digeſt *it, according to his ſouls preſent guſt, neceſſity, and diſpoſition. And ſurely, the effect was wonderful: for, it ſerved him upon all occaſions, as a*

moſt

most soveraign antidote against the poison of vices, as a Buckler against the violence of temptations, as a spur for the practice of all sorts of vertues. This order (I say) he constantly kept and observed throughout the whole Book, and found the effect thereof to be so virtually and invariably the same, that every part, and particle, wrought alike to his spiritual help, comfort, and advancement. And he hath frequently signified unto me, that none could express what he experienced; or understand what he did, or would say; but such only as were habituated in the like practice of devotion: adding moreover, that though he had continued this pious custome for above twenty years space; yet it seem'd still new to his internal palate, and so he thought it would still be to him, should his life-pilgrimage be never so long protracted. This surely is that best part *which*

which he here choſe, and embraced and which he hoped ſhould never *hereafter* be taken from him. *Luke.* 10.42.

There is now no more to be ſaid (Dear Chriſtian Reader, Lover of pure Truth, for my deſire is thou ſhouldſt be ſuch an one) but that, having thus diſcharged my obligation, I remain ſo well ſatisfied, as I conceive it needleſs to put pen to paper any more in this kind: and (were it not a preſumption to uſe thoſe divine expreſſions) I could with willing heart and ſoul breathe forth that ſaying of good old Simeon, Now diſmiſs thy ſervant (ô Lord) according to thy word in peace, for mine eyes have beheld thy ſalvation *Luke.*2.42.

God give unto thee (Dear Chriſtian Reader,) and to us all, the Bleſſing of the dew of Heaven; *Gen.*27.28. *that is, the fullneſs of his Grace,*

that

that it may be with us, and work with us, in this life, true perfection according to these Books; and, in the next, fullness of happiness in his ever-satiating Glory, Amen.

JESUS MARIA BENEDICTUS.

I have received from thy hand the Cros: Trulie the life of a good Monk is the Cros, but the Guide to Paradise.

THE FIRST BOOK OF THE IMITATION OF *CHRIST.*

CHAP. I.

Of the Imitation of Christ, and contempt of all worldly vanities.

1. HE *that followeth me walketh not in darkneſs,* ſaith the Lord, *Joh.* 8. 12.

Theſe are the words of Chriſt by which we are admoniſhed that

we must imitate His life, and manners; if we will be *truely illuminated*, and be freed from all blindness of heart.

Let it be therefore our chiefest care to meditate on the life of JESUS.

2. THE doctrin of Christ excels all the doctrins of the Saints; and he who hath His spirit, will find therein hidden Manna.

But it falls out that many feel but small devotion by often hearing of the Gospel, because they have not the *spirit* of *Christ*.

But he that would fully, and feelingly understand the words of *Christ*, must endeavour to conform his whole life to *His*.

3. WHAT will it profit thee to dispute learnedly of the *Trinity*, if for want of humility thou displease the *Trinity*? Surely,

Surely, High words make not a man juſt or holy, but a virtuous life makes him dear to God, 1 *Cor.* 13.

I had rather feel what Contrition is, than know the Definition of it.

If thou didſt underſtand the whole Bible, and the ſayings of all the Philoſophers, What would it profit thee, without *grace*, and the *love* of *God*?

Vanity of vanities, and all is vanity, but to love God, and ſerve him only, *Eccl.* 1.

This is the higheſt wiſdom, To tend to the Kingdom of heaven by the contempt of the world.

4. It is *vanity* therefore to ſeek after fading Riches, and to truſt in them.

It is alſo *vanity* to gape after honors, and to climb to an high ſtate.

It is *vanity* to follow the deſires of the fleſh, and to deſire that for

which thou must be afterward grievously punished.

It is *vanity* to hope, or wish for long-life, and to care little to live well.

It is *vanity* to heed only this present life, and to have no consideration of those things that are to come.

It is *vanity* to love that which with all speed passeth away, and not to hasten where there is everlasting joy.

5. REMEMBER often that Proverb, that *The eye is not satisfied with seeing, nor the ear with hearing.* Eccle. 1. 8.

Study therefore to withdraw thy mind from the love of visible things, and turn thy self to invisible things: for, those who follow their sensuality, stain their conscience, and lose the *Grace of God.*

CHAP.

CHAP. II.

Of the humble esteem of our Selves.

1. *EVERY man naturally desires to Know*; but what avails knowledg without the fear of *God*? *Eccl.* 1.

Truly, an humble Husbandman that serveth *God*, is better than a proud Philosopher, who, neglecting himself, contemplates the course of the heavens.

He that knows himself well, is contemptible to himself, and delights not in the praises of men.

If I should know all things in the world, and were not in charity; What would that help me in the sight of God? Who will judg me according to my deeds.

2. QUIET thy self from the busie

desire of Knowing; for, therein is found much distraction, and deceit. 1 *Cor.* 8.

¶ The learned would willingly seem such to others, and be esteemed wise.

There are many things the knowledg wherof do very little profit the soul; and, he is very unwise who attends to other things than what may serve to his salvation.

Many words do not satisfie the soul; but, a good life comforts the mind, and a pure conscience gives great confidence in God.

3. THE more and better thou knowest, the more grievously shalt thou be judged, unless thy life be also more holy.

Wherefore, Desire not to be praised for any Act, or Knowledg, but rather fear for the knowledg given thee.

But,

But, if thou think thou knoweſt much, and underſtandeſt very well; yet know, There be many more things which thou underſtandeſt not.

Seek not to know things above thy reach, but rather confeſs thy ignorance, *Rom.* 12.

Why wilt thou preferre thy ſelf before any one, ſeeing there are many more learned, and skilful in the Law than thy ſelf.

If thou wilt know, and learn any thing profitably, love to be unknown, and to be eſteemed as nothing.

4. THIS is the moſt high, and profitable leſſon; Truly to know, and deſpiſe, Our-ſelves.

It is great wiſdom and perfection, To eſteem nothing of a mans Self, and to think alwayes well and commendably of Others.

If thou shouldest see any man openly sin, or commit any grievous offence; yet oughtest thou, not to esteem the better of thy self, because thou knowest not how long thou mayst be able to remain in a good state.

We are all frail; but thou shouldest esteem none more frail than thy self.

Chap. III.

Of the Doctrine of Truth.

1. HAPPY is he whom *Truth* by it self teacheth, not by figures and passing words, but as it is in it self. *Psal.* 93.

Our opinion, and our sense do's often deceive us, and sees but little, *Eccles.* 3.

What avails earnest cavilling about

bout dark and hidden things, ſince we ſhall not be reprehended in judgment for not knowing them?

It is great folly to neglect profitable things, and things neceſſary; and ſo, freely give our minds to thoſe which are curious and hurtful.

Having eyes, we ſee not. Pſa. 113.

2. WHAT have we to do with *Genus* and *Species*, (terms of Logicians)?

He to whom the *Eternal Word* ſpeaketh is free from multiplicity of opinions.

From one word, all; and all ſpeak *One*; and this is the *Beginning which ſpeaks alſo to us*: without it, no man underſtandeth, or judgeth rightly. *Jo.* 8. 25.

He to whom all things are *One*; and who draws all things to One, and who ſees all things in One; may

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He to whom all things are *One*; and who draws all things to One, and who ſees all things in One; may

be ſtable in heart, and remain *peaceable in God.*

O, *Truly God*, make me one with *thee* in perpetual *love.*

It is tedious to me oftentimes to read, and hear many things.

In Thee, is all that I will, or deſire.

Let all Doctors hold their peace; let all creatures be ſilent in thy ſight: Speak thou to me, alone.

3. THE more a man is united to himſelf, and inwardly *ſimplified*, the more and higher things doth he underſtand without labour; becauſe he receives *light* of underſtanding from above, *Matt.* 11.

A pure, ſimple, and ſtable ſpirit, is not diſtracted by many affairs, becauſe he doth them all to the honour of *God*; and being quiet in himſelf, endeavours to be free from all ſelf-ſeeking. *Luk.* 10.

Who

Who hinders and troubles thee, more than thy unmortified affection of heart?

A good and devout man doth diſpoſe his works inwardly, which he is to do outwardly; neither do they draw him to the deſires of vicious inclinations, but he ſquares them to the judgment of right reaſon.

Who hath a ſtronger combat than he that ſtrives to overcome himſelf?

And this ſhould be our buſineſs, (*viz*), To overcome our ſelves, and daily to become more powerful over our ſelves, and grow ſtill better.

4. All perfection in this life is mixed with ſome imperfection, and all knowledg with ſome ignorance.

The humble knowledg of Thy-Self, is a more aſſured way to *God*, than a deep ſearch after Learning.

Learn-

Learning is not to be blamed, nor the meer knowledg of a thing; which, in it ſelf, is good, and ordained by *God*: but a good Conſcience, and a virtuous Life is always to be preferred before it.

But, becauſe many deſire rather to know much, than live well; therefore they often erre, and reap none, or but ſmall, profit.

5. O, if men would beſtow as much labour in rooting out of vices, and planting virtues, as they do in moving of queſtions! there would not be ſo great evils committed, nor ſo great ſcandals among the people, nor ſo much looſneſs in *Monaſteries*.

Truly at the day of Judgment, we ſhall not be examined, What we have read, but what we have done: nor, How well we have learned, but how religiouſly we have lived, *Matt.* 25. Tell

Tell me, Where are now all thoſe Maſters, with whom thou wert ſo well acquainted whilſt they lived and flouriſhed in learning? Now, others poſſeſs their livings, and I know not whether they ever think of them: In their life, they ſeemed ſomething, but now they are not ſpoken of.

6. O how ſoon doth the glory of this world paſs away? Would to God, their lives had been anſwerable to their knowledg, then had their ſtudy, and reading been to good purpoſe, *Eccl.* 2.

How many periſh in this world by vain learning, who little care for the ſervice of *God? Tit.* 2.

And, becauſe they chooſe rather to be great than humble, therefore they vaniſh away in their own imaginations, *Rom.* 1.

He is truly great, who greatly

loves

loves God. Matt. 18. & 23.

He is truly great, who is little in his own eyes, and makes no account of all heighth of honour.

He is truly wise, who esteems all earthly things as dung, *that he may gain Christ, Phil.* 3.

For, He is truly learned, who doth the will of God, and forsakes his own.

Chap. IV.

Of Prudence in our actions.

1. WE must not give credit to every word, or suggestion; but leisurely and warily weigh the thing according to *God.*

But alas! such is our weakness, that commonly we sooner believe, and speak evil than good of others. 1 *John* 4.

But, Perfect men do not easily give

give credit to every thing, that is told them; because they know humane infirmity to be very prone to evil, and slippery enough in words, *Jam.* 3. *Gen.* 8.

2. It is great wisdom not to be rash in our doings, nor to stand stiffly in our own opinions; as also, not to believe every mans words, nor presently to tell to others, what thou hast heard, and believed, *Prov.* 19. 17. *Job.* 17.

Consult with a wise, and conscientious man, and seek to be instructed by a better, rather than to follow thine own inventions. *Ecclus.* 19. *Prov.* 12. 15.

A good life makes a man wise according to *God*, and skilful in many things, *Ecclus.* 2.

The more humble a man is in himself, and more subject to *God*, so much more *prudent* shall he be in all things, and more at *peace*. Chap.

CHAP. V.

Of the reading of holy Scriptures.

1. TRUTH, not Eloquence, is to be ſought for, in holy Scriptures.

All holy Scripture ought to be read with the ſame Spirit where-with it was written. *Rom.* 15.

We muſt rather ſearch for profit in Scriptures, than ſubtilty of ſpeech. 2 *Cor.* 2.

We ſhould as willingly read devout, and ſimple books, as high and learned.

Let not the authority of the Writer offend thee, whether he be learned, or not; but let the *love of pure Truth*, lead thee to read.

Enquire not *who* ſpake, but mark *what* is ſpoken.

2. MEN

2. MEN pass away, but *the Truth of our Lord remaineth for ever.* Psal. 16, *Luke* 22.

God speaks divers wayes unto us without respect of persons.

Our own curiosity often hinders us in reading of the Scriptures, whilst we will understand, and discuss that which should simply be passed over, *Rom.* 2. 10.

If thou wilt reap profit, read humbly, simply, and faithfully: nor at any time desire to be esteemed learned.

Enquire willingly after, and hear with silence the words of holy men: and let not the parables of the Elders displease thee, for they are not spoken without cause.

CHAP

CHAP. VI.

Of Inordinate Affections.

1. WHENSOEVER, a man desires any thing inordinately, he is presently disquieted in himself.

The proud, and covetous are never at rest; the poor and humble in spirit, live together in all *peace*.

The man who is not perfectly dead to himself, is soon tempted, and overcome in small, and trifling things.

He who is weak in *spirit*, and in a manner yet carnal, and inclined to sensible things, can hardly withdraw himself wholy from earthly desires: and therefore he is often afflicted when he withdraws himself from them, and easily falls into indignation, if any resist him.

2 AND

2. AND if he hath followed his appetite, he is presently grieved through remorse of conscience, by reason he hath given way to his passion, which conduced nothing to the *peace* he sought for.

True *peace* therefore of heart is obtained by resisting passions, not by yielding to them.

There is no *peace* therefore in the heart of a carnal man, nor in a man addicted to outward things; but, in a fervent *spiritual* man.

CHAP. VII.

Of flying Pride, and vain Hope.

1. HE is vain, who puts his trust in man, or in creatures. *Jer.* 17. 1.

Be not ashamed to serve others for

for the *love of* JESUS *Christ*, nor to be esteemed poor in this world.

Presume not upon thy self, but put thy trust in *God*, *Psal.* 30.

Do what thou canst, and *God* will assist thy good-will.

Trust not in thine own knowledg, nor in the craft of any man living; but rather in the *grace of God*, who helps the humble, and humbles those who presume of themselves.

2. GLORY not in wealth if thou have it; nor in friends, because they are powerful; but in *God*, who giveth all things, and above all desires to give himself.

Boast not of the stature or beauty of thy body, which is disfigured and broken by a small sickness.

Please not thy self in thy ability, or wit, lest thou displease *God*, to whom

whom appertains all the good which naturally thou haſt.

3. THINK not thy ſelf better than others, leſt perhaps in the ſight of *God*, who knows what is in man, thou be accounted worſe, *Exod.* 3. 12.

Be not proud of thy good works, for the judgment of *God* and men are different.

That often offends *Him* which pleaſeth men.

If thou haſt any good in thee, believe better of others, that ſo thou mayſt keep humility.

It is no harm to thee to eſteem thy ſelf worſe than any man, but it is very hurtful to thee to preferre thy ſelf before any one.

The humble enjoy perpetual *peace*, but in the heart of the proud is envy and frequent indignation.

CHAP.

CHAP. VIII.

Of shunning too much familiarity.

1. OPEN *not thy heart to every man*, but treat thy affairs with him that is wise, and fears *God*. *Eccl.* 8.

Keep company but seldom with young folks, and strangers.

Flatter not the rich, nor do thou willingly appear before great persons.

Keep company with the humble, *simple*, devout, and virtuous, and talk with them of those things which may make thee better.

Be not familiar with any woman, but commend all good women in general to *God*.

Desire only to be familiar with *God* and his Angels, and fly the familiarity of men.

2. WE

2. We muſt *love* all, but familiarity is not expedient.

It falls out ſometimes that the fame of a perſon makes him eſteemed, whoſe preſence is not pleaſing to the eyes of the beholders.

We think ſometimes to pleaſe others by our company, and many times it falls out that we rather diſguſt them through the evil behaviour they ſee in us.

Chap. IX.

Of Obedience, and Subjection.

1. It is a very great matter to remain in obedience, to live under a Prelate, and not to be at our own diſpoſing.

It is much ſafer to live in the ſtate of Subjection, than of Prelacy.

Many

Many live under obedience rather out of neceſſity, than for the *love of God*: and ſuch are in pain, and eaſily murmure, neither can they attain to freedom of mind, unleſs they ſubmit themſelves with all their hearts for *Gods ſake*.

Run here and there; thou ſhalt find no reſt, unleſs in humble ſubjection under the goverment of a Prelate.

The imagination and change of places have deceived many.

2. TRUE it is, that every one willingly doth that which ſutes beſt to his own ſenſe and liking, and is inclined moſt to ſuch as are of his own mind: but if *God* be amongſt us, we muſt leave our own judgment ſometimes, for the preſervation of *peace*.

Who is ſo wiſe that he can fully know all things?

Truſt

Truſt not therefore too much to thine own judgment; but, be willing to hear the opinions of others.

If that which thou thinkeſt be good, and notwithſtanding thou forſakeſt it for *God*, to follow another, thou ſhalt more profit thereby; *For I have often heard, that, It is more ſecure to hear, and take advice, than to give it.*

It may alſo happen that each ones opinion is good; but, not to yield to another when reaſon or cauſe requires, is a ſign of wilfulneſs, and pride.

CHAP. X

Of avoiding ſuperfluity of words.

1. FLY the tumult of men, as much as thou canſt; for all diſcourſe of worldly affairs is a

great hinderance to piety, though ſpoken with a *ſimple* intention. *Mat.* 4. 14.

For we are quickly defiled and enthralled with vanity. *Joh.* 6.

I wiſh I had often held my peace, and not been in company.

But why do we ſo willingly ſpeak and talk with one another, when notwithſtanding we ſeldom return to ſilence, without harm of conſcience? The reaſon is, we ſeek to comfort our ſelves by mutual diſcourſe, and deſire to eaſe our minds wearied with divers thoughts.

And we very willingly talk, and think of ſuch things as we moſt love, or deſire, or of thoſe that we diſlike, *Matt.* 12. *Luke* 6. *Acts* 1.

2. BUT alas! oftentimes in vain, and to no purpoſe; for, this outward comfort is the cauſe of no ſmall loſs of *inward*, and divine conſolation. We

We must therefore watch, and pray, lest the time pass away in idleness.

If it be fit, and expedient to speak, let it be that which may edifie.

Evil custom, and neglect of our advancement in goodness, is a great cause of inconsiderate speech. *Rom.* 15.

Notwithstanding, devout discourses do not a little further our *spiritual* progress, especially where persons of one mind, and *spirit*, are gathered together in *God.*

Chap. XI.

Of obtaining peace, and zeal of profiting.

WE might enjoy much *peace*, if we would not busie our selves with what others say,

and do; and with that which doth not at all belong unto us.

How can he remain long in *peace* who thrusts himself into the affairs of others? who seeks occasions without, and seldom and little recollects himself interiourly?

2. BLESSED are the *simple*, for they shall enjoy much *peace*. *Mat.* 5.

What was the reason why some of the *Saints* were so perfect and contemplative?

Because they strove to mortifie themselves wholy from all earthly desires, and therefore they could with the force of their whole affection cleave unto *God*, and freely attend to themselves.

We are too much busied with our own passions, and too sollicitous after things which soon pass away.

We seldom also overcome any one vice perfectly, nor are inflamed to

to daily profiting, and therefore we remain cold and tepid.

3. IF we were perfectly dead to our ſelves, and not intangled within; then we might taſte alſo divine things, and have ſome experience of heavenly contemplation.

The whole, and greateſt hinderance, is becauſe we are not free from our paſſions, and deſires; neither do we endeavour to walk in the perfect way of the Saints.

Alſo when any ſmall adverſity happens, we are ſoon caſt down, and ſeek after humane comfort.

4. IF we would endeavour like ſtout men to ſtand in the battel, we ſhould ſurely find the help of *God* from heaven.

For, He who gives us occaſions to fight, that we may overcome, is ready to help thoſe that fight manfully,

and trust in His *grace.*

If we esteem our progress in Religion to lye in the observation of outward things, our devotion will soon be at an end.

Let us then lay the Axe to the root of the tree, that being freed from passions we may enjoy a quiet mind.

5. If every year we could root out one vice, we should soon become perfect men.

But now oftentimes we perceive it goes contrary with us, and that we were better, and more pure in the beginning of our conversion, than after many years of our profession.

Our zeal, and profit, should daily encrease:

But now it is counted a great matter if a man can but retain some part of his first spirit.

If

If we ſhould uſe but a little violence in the beginning, then all things afterwards might be done with eaſe, and joy.

6. IT is grievous to leave off a cuſtome, but much more grievous to go againſt our own will.

But if thou doſt not overcome ſmall and eaſie things, when wilt thou overcome harder things?

Reſiſt thy inclination in the beginning, and break off evil cuſtom; leſt perchance by little and little it draw thee to greater difficulty.

O, if thou didſt but conſider how much *peace* thou ſhouldeſt cauſe to thy ſelf, and joy to others, by behaving thy ſelf well; I ſuppoſe thou wouldſt more earneſtly ſeek thy ſpiritual profit!

CHAP. XII.

Of the profit of Adversity.

1. IT is good for us that sometimes we have adversities, and contradictions; because, it makes a man enter into himself, that he may know himself to be in banishment, and not trust in any thing in the world. *Tob.* 2.

It is good for us that we be sometimes contradicted, and that we be thought evil and imperfect, though we do, and intend well.

These things do often further humility, and defend us from vainglory.

For, then do we better seek God for our *inward* witness, when outwardly we are despised by men, and little credit is given to us.

2. A

2. A man ſhould therefore ſo wholy ſettle himſelf in God, that he may not need to ſeek many humane comforts.

When a man of *good-will* is troubled, or tempted, or afflicted with evil thoughts; then he underſtands what need he hath of *God*, without Whom he perceives he can do no good.

Then alſo doth he grieve, lament, and pray, by reaſon of the evils which he ſuffers.

Then is he weary of living longer, and wiſheth that death would come, *that he might be diſſolved, and be with Chriſt, Phil.* 1.

Then alſo, he well perceives, that perfect ſecurity, and full *peace* cannot be had in this world.

CHAP. XIII.

Of resisting Temptations.

1. AS long as we live in this world, we cannot be without tribulation, and temptation; and therefore it is written in *Job*, *The life of man is a temptation upon earth*, *Job.* 7.

Every one therefore ought to be careful about his temptations, and watchful in *prayer*, lest the Devil, who never sleeps (*but goes about seeking whom he may devour*) deceive him. 1 *Pet.* 5.

No man is so perfect and holy, but sometimes he hath temptations, and we cannot be wholy free from them.

2. TEMPTATIONS notwithstanding are often profitable unto man,

man, though they be troubleſome, and grievous; for, by them man is humbled, purged, and inſtructed.

All the *Saints* have paſſed through, and profited by many tribulations and temptations. *Acts* 14.

And thoſe who could not bear their temptations, became reprobate and fell from *God*.

There is no Order ſo holy, nor Place ſo ſecret, where there are no temptations, and adverſities.

3. THERE is no man, whilſt he lives, wholy ſecure from temptations; for, the root of temptations is in us, ſeeing we are born in concupiſcence.

One temptation going away, another comes; and we have always ſomewhat to ſuffer, having loſt our ſoveraign felicity.

Many by ſeeking to fly temptations

tions, fall more grievously into them.

We cannot overcome by flight only; but, through *patience*, and *true humility*, we become stronger than our enemies.

4. He who shuns them only outwardly, and pulls them not up by the roots, will profit little; yea, he shall the sooner be tempted again, and find himself worse than before.

By little and little with patience, and *longanimity* thou shalt (by *Gods* help) better overcome, than by violence, and thine own importunity.

Take counsel often in temptations, and deal not roughly with him that is tempted; but give him comfort, as thou wouldst wish to thy self.

5. The beginning of all evil temp-

temptations is inconſtancy of mind, and want of confidence in *God.*

For, As a ſhip without a ſtern, is toſſed to and fro, by the waves; ſo, the man that is negligent, and quits his reſolution, is many wayes tempted.

Fire tries iron, and temptation tries a juſt man, Ecclus. 32.

We know not many times what we can do; but, temptations ſhew what we are.

We muſt be watchful, eſpecially in the beginning of a Temptation; for, then is the enemy more eaſily vanquiſhed, if he be not ſuffered to enter the door of the heart, but be reſiſted at the threſhold, at his firſt knock.

Whereupon one ſaid, *Reſiſt the beginning; after, remedies come too late,* Ecclus. 32.

For, firſt a ſimple thought comes into the mind, then a ſtrong imagination,

gination, afterwards delectation, and evil motion, and consent; and so by little and little the wicked enemy gets full entrance, being not resisted at the first.

And how much the longer as a man is negligent in resisting, the weaker doth he become daily, and the enemy more powerful against him.

6. SOME suffer greater temptations in the beginning of their conversion, and some in the end; some again, are much troubled all their life-time.

Some are but leightly tempted, according to the wisdom and equity of the divine ordination; which weighs the states, and merits of men, and pre-ordains all for the salvation of his elect.

WE must not therefore despair when

when we are tempted; but pray more fervently to *God*, that he will vouchsafe to help us in all tribulations: who, no doubt, according to the saying of St. *Paul*, will make *with the temptation such issue, that we may be able to sustain it*, 1 Cor. 10.

Let us therefore *humble our selves under the mighty hand of God*, in all tribulation, and temptation; for, *He will save, and exalt the humble in spirit*, 2 *Pet.* 9.

7. In temptations & tribulations, a man is proved; how much he hath profited, and his merit is the greater, and his virtue more apparent.

Neither is it much, if a man be devout, and fervent when he feels no difficulty: but if, in time of adversity, he demean himself patiently, there is hope of great profit.

Many are preserved from great temptations, who in lesser are daily

ly overcome, that, being humbled, they may never presume of themselves in great matters, who are so weak in small occasions.

CHAP. XIV.

Of avoiding rash judgment.

1. TURN thine eyes upon thy self, and take heed of judging the actions of others.

In judging others man labours in vain, often errs, and easily sins. *Mat.* 7. *Rom.* 2.

But in judging and examining himself, he alwayes labours profitably. *Eccl.* 3.

As we affect a thing, so do we often judg of it; for private love easily robs us of true judgment.

If *God* were alwayes the *pure intention* of our desire, we should not be

ſo eaſily troubled for the reſiſtance of our own opinion.

2. BUT ſome ſecret inward inclination, or outward affection doth often concur; which alſo draws us after it.

Many ſecretly ſeek themſelves in the things which they do, and know it not.

They ſeem alſo to live in good *peace* of mind, when things are done according to their will, & judgment: But if they be done otherwiſe than they deſire, they are ſoon moved, and grow ſad.

The diverſities of judgments, and opinions, are many times the cauſe of diſſentions amongſt friends, and Citizens, amongſt religious and devout perſons. *Matt.* 10. *Luke* 12.

3. AN old cuſtom is hardly broken, and no man is led willingly fur-

further than himself likes.

If thou rely more upon thine own reason and industry, than upon the *subjective* virtue to JESUS *Christ*, thou shalt rarely, and hardly be an illuminated man; for, *God* will have us perfectly subject to him, and to *transcend* all reason through inflamed love. *Jer.* 13.

CHAP. XV.

Of Works done for the love of God.

1. FOR no worldly thing, nor for the love of any man whatsoever, is the least evil to be committed.

Yet for the good of one that wants it, a good work may be omitted, or changed into a better; for, by this the good work is not lost, but changed into a better. *Mat.* 18. With-

Without the *love of God*, the outward work profits nothing.

But whatſoever is done for the *love of God*, be it never ſo little, & contemptible, is made wholly profitable; for God weighs the affection more than the action. 1 *Cor.* 13.

2. He doth much, that *loves* much.

He doth much, that doth a thing well.

He doth well, who rather ſerves the community, than his own will.

That ſeems oftentimes to be *charity*, which is rather carnality. *Luk.* 7.

For, the inclination of the fleſh, ſelf-will, hope of reward, deſire of commodity, will ſeldom be wanting. *Phil.* 2.

3. He who *loves God truly* and perfectly, ſeeks not himſelf in any thing,

thing, but in all things desires only the glory of God. 1 *Cor.* 13.

He envies no man, because he loves no private joy; neither will he rejoyce in himself, but above all good wisheth to enjoy *God*.

He attributes nothing that is good to any man, but referrs it wholy to *God*: from Whom, as from a fountain, all things proceed; and in Whom, as in their end, all the Saints joyfully rest.

O! he that had but one spark of true charity, would certainly perceive all earthly things to be full of vanity!

CHAP. XVI.

Of bearing with the defects of others.

1. WHAT a man cannot mend in himself, or in others, he

he ought to bear patiently, till *God* ordain otherwiſe.

Think, that perhaps it is better ſo for thy tryal, and patience, without which our merits are not much to be weighed. *Mat. 6. Luk. 11.*

When notwithſtanding thou haſt ſuch hinderances, thou muſt pray that *God* would vouchſafe to aſſiſt thee, and enable thee to bear them well.

2. If any one being once, or twice admoniſhed, do not yield; contend not with him, but commit all to *God*, that his will may be done, and he honoured in all his ſervants, who knows how to turn evil into good. *Matt. 6. 1 Theſ. 3.*

Endeavour to be patient in bearing with the defects and infirmities of others, whatſoever they be; ſince thou thy ſelf haſt many things which others muſt bear withall.

If

If thou canſt not make thy ſelf as thou wouldſt, How canſt thou expect to have another according to thy liking?

We would willingly have others perfect, and yet we mend not our own faults.

3. We would have others to be ſtrictly corrected, and will not be corrected our ſelves.

The large liberty of others diſpleaſeth us, and yet we will not be denied what we deſire.

We would have others to be reſtrained by Laws, but in no ſort will we ſuffer our ſelves to be ſo.

By this it appears how ſeldom we love our neighbours as our ſelves.

If all were perfect, What ſhould we have to ſuffer from others for God?

4. But now *God* hath ſo ordained,

dained, that we learn to bear one anothers burthens; for, there is no man without defect, no man without burthen, no man ſufficient for himſelf, no man wiſe enough for himſelf. *Luke* 8. *Gal.* 6.

We ought therefore to bear with one another, to comfort, help, inſtruct, and admoniſh one another.

Every ones virtue is beſt diſcovered by occaſion of adverſity; for, occaſions do not make a man frail, but ſhew what he is.

CHAP. XVII.

Of Monaſtical Life.

1. THOU muſt learn to break thy will in many things, if thou wilt live in peace and concord with others. *Gal.* 6.

It is no ſmall matter to dwell in Mona-

Monasteries, or in Congregations, and there to converse without com plaint, and to persevere faithful til death.

Blessed is he who hath lived well and died happily there. *Luke* 8.

If thou wilt be stedfast, and ad vance well in piety; esteem thy self as a banished man, and a Pil grim on earth.

Thou must be made a fool f Christ, if thou wilt lead a religious life.

2. The Habit, and the Tonsure contribute little; but the change o manners, and the intire mortifica tion of the passions, make a true Re ligious man. 1 *Pet.* 2.

He that seeks any thing but purely *God*, and the good of his soul, shal find nothing but trouble and sor row.

He cannot long remain in peace who

who doth not endeavour to be the leaſt, and ſubject to all.

3. THOU didſt come to ſerve, not to rule; know thou art called to ſuffer, and labour, and not to be idle and prate.

Here, men are tried as gold in the furnace. *Matt.* 20.

Here, no man can be ſtedfaſt, unleſs he humble himſelf with all his heart, for the *love of God. Wiſd.* 3.

CHAP. XVIII.

Of the Examples of the holy Fathers.

1. BEHOLD the lively Examples of the holy Fathers, in whom true perfection, and Religion, ſhined; and thou ſhalt ſee how little, and almoſt nothing that is which we do. *Heb.* 11.

Alas! What is our life, compared to others?

The Saints, and Friends of *Christ* ſerved our Lord in hunger and thirſt, in cold and nakedneſs, in labour and wearineſs, in watchings and faſtings, in prayers and holy meditations, in perſecutions and many reproaches.

2. O, How many and grievous tribulations did the Apoſtles, Martyrs, Confeſſors, Virgins, and all the reſt, who deſired to follow the ſteps of Chriſt, ſuffer!

For, They hated their lives in this world, that they might poſſeſs them in everlaſting life. John. 12. Mat. 17.

O, How ſtrict and abandoned lives did the holy Fathers live in the Wilderneſs! O, how long and grievous temptations did they ſuffer! how frequently were they vexed by the enemy! how continual and fervent

fervent prayers did they offer to *God*! what rigorous abſtinencies did they undergo! how great zeal and fervour had they of their *ſpiritual profit*! what ſtrong war did they wage for the conqueſt of vice! how pure and upright was their intention to *God!* All the day they laboured, and in the night they attended to continual *prayer*; though, in labouring, they ceaſed not from *Mental prayer.*

3. THEY ſpent all their time profitably; every hour ſeem'd ſhort to them to attend to *God*; and, through the great ſweetneſs of *contemplation*, they forgot the neceſſity of feeding their bodies.

They renounced all riches, dignities, honours, friends and kindred.

They deſired nothing belonging to the world. *Matt.* 19.

They ſcarce took what was ne-

ceſſary to the preſervation of life.

They were troubled to ſerve their bodies even in neceſſity.

They were, therefore, poor in earthly things; but very rich in *Grace*, and virtues.

Outwardly they wanted, but inwardly they were filled with *grace* and *divine comfort*.

4. THEY were ſtrangers to the world, but near, and familiar friends to *God*. *James* 4.

They ſeemed to themſelves as nothing, and were by this world deſpiſed; but, they were precious and beloved in the ſight of *God*.

They were grounded in *true humility*, lived in ſimple obedience, and walked in charity and patience.

They therefore profited daily in *ſpirit*, and obtained great favour with *God*.

They

They are given for an example to all Religious persons.

And they should more stirr us up to spiritual fervour, than the number of the cold, and negligent Religious, to looseness.

5. O, How great was the fervor of all Religious, in their first Institution! O, how great devotion to *prayer!* how great emulation of virtue! how exact discipline flourished! how great reverence, and obedience under the rule of a Master, was in all things observed!

Their footsteps yet remaining testifie that they were truly perfect, and holy men; who, fighting so valiantly, trod the world under their feet.

Now he is much accounted of, who transgresseth not his Rule, who can patiently endure what he hath professed.

6. O the coldneſs, and negligence of our ſtate, that we ſo ſoon decline from our firſt fervor! and now through ſloth, and ſtupidity we are weary of our lives.

Would to *God* the deſire of advancement in virtue were not wholly aſleep in thee, who haſt often beheld ſo many examples of devout perſons!

CHAP. XIX.

Of the Exerciſes of a good Religious man.

1. THE life of a good religious man ought to excel in all virtues, that he may *inwardly* be ſuch, as outwardly he ſeems to men to be. *Matt.* 5.

And, according to reaſon, he ought to

to be much more *inwardly* than outwardly appears: for the beholder of our hearts is *God*; Whom we ought moſt highly to reverence whereſoever we are, and walk as Angels, *pure* in his ſight. *Pſal.* 132. *Heb.* 4.

We muſt every day renew our reſolution, and excite our ſelves to fervour, as if this were the firſt day of our converſion, and ſay, *Aſſiſt me O Lord in my good purpoſe*, and in thy holy ſervice: and grant unto me this day, that I may perfectly begin; for it is nothing that I have hitherto done. *Pſal.* 15.

2. ACCORDING to our reſolution ſhall be the ſucceſs of our profit, and much diligence is neceſſary for him that will profit much.

For if *he* often fails who makes a ſtrong reſolution; What will he do who ſeldom, or leſs ſtedfaſtly, reſolves upon any thing?

The not-performing our purpose happens many ways; and the leight omission of our Exercises, seldom passeth without some loss.

The purpose of just men depends rather on the *grace of God*, than their own wisdom, in Whom they always confide whatever they undertake.

For, *Man purposeth, and God disposeth; neither is the way of man in his own hands*, Prov. 16.

3. IF for piety's sake, or intention of doing good to our brother, we sometimes omit our accustomed Exercise; it may easily be recovered afterwards:

But if, through tediousness of mind, or negligence, it be leightly left off; it is worthy of blame, and will prove hurtful.

Let us endeavour what we can; yet we shall fail in many things, Ecclus. 7. Some-

Something certain notwithstanding is always to be purpoſed, eſpecially againſt that which moſt hinders us.

Our outward and *inward* behaviour ought alſo to be examined, and ordered; becauſe, both are neceſſary to our advancement.

4. IF thou canſt not always recollect thy ſelf, yet do it ſometimes, at leaſt once a day; to wit, either in the Morning, or Evening.

In the Morning reſolve, in the Evening examine, the performance, how thou haſt that day behaved thy ſelf in *thought, word, and deed*; for, in theſe, perhaps, thou haſt offended *God*, and thy *Neighbour*. *Deut.* 4.

Beſtirr thy ſelf like a Man, againſt all the wickedneſs of the Devil.

Bridle Cluttony, and then ſhalt

the more eaſily curb all other inclinations of the fleſh.

Be never altogether idle, but be either reading, or writing, or praying, or meditating, or doing ſomething profitable for the common good.

Bodily exerciſes notwithſtanding are to be diſcreetly uſed, and not equally to be undertaken by all.

5. THOSE things which are not common are not to be expoſed to publick view: for private things are more ſafely done in ſecret.

Yet, art thou to take heed, that thou be not ſlack to Common exerciſes, and more forward to Private.

But having faithfully, and fully performed, what thou art bound to do, and is enjoyned thee; if thou haſt more leiſure, return to thy ſelf as thy devotion ſhall move thee.

All cannot have the ſelf-ſame exerciſe;

ercise; but one is more proper for this, another for that.

Moreover, according to the time, and occasion, divers exercises are more pleasing: for, some relish better upon working days, other upon holy-days.

Some are necessary in time of temptation, others in time of peace and tranquillity.

Some we willingly think on, when we are sad; and others, when we are joyful in our Lord.

6. UPON principal Holy-days our good exercises are to be renewed, and the suffrages of the Saints to be more fervently implored.

From feast, to feast we must resolv with our selves, as if we were then to depart out of this world, and come to the eternal Feasts in the next.

And therefore we ought to prepare

pare our ſelves carefully at Holy-times; and to live more devoutly, and keep all Obſervances more exactly; as if we were ſhortly to receive the reward of our labour from *God*.

7. AND, if it be deferred, Let us believe our ſelves not well prepared, and unworthy as yet of that great *glory*, which ſhall be revealed in us at the appointed time: and, in the mean time, let us endeavour to prepare our ſelves better, for our Departure. *Rom.* 8.

Bleſſed is the Servant (ſays Saint *Luke* the Evangeliſt) *whom, when his Lord ſhall come, he ſhall find watching. Amen, I ſay unto you, He ſhall place him over all his poſſeſſions*, Luke 12. Matt. 14.

CHAP.

CHAP. XX.

Of the love of Solitude and Silence.

1. SEEK out a fit time to attend to thy Self, and often call to mind the benefits of *God.*

Leave Curioſities.

Read ſuch things as cauſe compunction, rather than ſuch as fill the head with notions. *Eccluſ.* 1.

If thou withdraw thy ſelf from ſuperfluous talk, and idle wandring abroad, and from hearing of news, and tales; thou ſhalt find time ſufficient, and fit, to exerciſe thy ſelf in good meditations.

The greateſt Saints avoided the company of men, as much as they could; and choſe to live in ſecret, with God. *Heb.* 1.

2. *I returned leſs man* (ſaid one)

as

as often as I was amongst men : this we often find when we talk long: It is easier, To keep silence altogether, than, Not to exceed in words. *Senec. Epist. 7.*

It is easier, To stay at home, than, To demean ones self well abroad.

Whosoever therefore pretends to attain to *internal* and *spiritual* things, ought to withdraw himself with *JESUS* from the multitude.

No man goes safely abroad, but he who willingly stays at home.

No man securely speaks, but he who willingly holds his peace.

No man securely governs, but he who delights to live in subjection.

No man securely commands, but he who hath learned well to obey.

3. No man securely rejoyceth, unless he have within him the testimony of a good conscience.

Yet, the security of the Saints

was

was always full of the fear of *God*.

Neither were they leſs carefull and humble in themſelves, though they ſhined with *grace* and great virtues.

But the ſecurity of evil men riſes from pride and preſumption, which in the end deceives them.

Never promiſe thy ſelf ſecurity in this life, though thou think thy ſelf to be a good Monk, or a devout Hermit.

4. OFTEN-times, thoſe who are better in the judgment of men, are in greater danger by reaſon of their too much confidence.

It is more profitable to many therefore, Not to be altogether free from temptations, but, To be often aſſaulted, leſt they ſhould be too ſecure, and ſo, perhaps, be puffed up with pride, or give themſelves too freely to outward comforts.

O how good a conſcience ſhould he keep, who would never ſeek after tranſitory joy, nor buſie himſelf with the things of this world!

O how great *peace* and *quietneſs* ſhould he poſſeſs, who would cut off all vain cares, and only think of divine things, and ſuch as conduce to the good of his ſoul; and place all his hope in GOD!

5. NO man is worthy of heavenly comfort, who doth not diligently exerciſe himſelf in holy Compunction.

If thou deſireſt true Contrition of heart, enter into thy Cloſet, and ſhut out the tumults of the world, as it is written, *Be contrite in your Cloſets*, Pſal. 4.

Thou ſhalt find in thy Cell, what thou ſhalt often loſe abroad.

Thy Cell, if thou continue in it, grows ſweet; and, if thou love not

to

to ſtay in it, becomes tedious.

If, in the beginning of thy Converſion, thou doſt cultivate, and keep it well; it will be afterwards a dear friend, and a moſt delightful comfort to thee.

6. IN ſilence and *quiet*, the devout ſoul reaps profit, and learns the ſecrets of holy Scriptures.

There ſhe finds floods of tears, wherein ſhe may every night waſh, and cleanſe her ſelf; that ſhe may become ſo much the more familiar with her Maker, by how much the farther ſhe lives from all worldly tumults. *Pſal. 6.*

For, *God* with his holy Angels will draw near to him, who withdraws himſelf from his acquaintance, and friends.

It is better for a man to lye hid, and take care of himſelf; than, neglecting himſelf, to do Miracles.

It is commendable for a Religious man to keep his Cell, and go seldom abroad; and, to avoid seeing, or being seen by men.

7. WHY wilt thou see that which thou oughtest not to have?

The world passeth away and the desires of it, 1 Joh. 2.

Our sensuality draws us to rove abroad, but when the hour is past, What carry we back, but a burthened conscience, and distracted mind?

A joyful going abroad oftentimes causeth a sorrowful coming home; and a merry Evening makes a sad Morning.

So, All carnal joy hath a pleasant entrance; but, in the end, it bites and destroys us.

What canst thou see elsewhere, which thou seest not here? behold here heaven, and earth, and all the elements; for, of these all things are made.

WHAT

8. WHAT canſt thou ſee any where under the Sun that can continue long?

Thou thinkeſt perhaps to be ſatisfied, but thou canſt never be ſo.

If thou couldſt ſee all things that are, what were it but a vain ſight. *Eccl.* 1.

Lift up thine eyes to *God* on high, and ask pardon for thy ſins, and negligences. *Eccl.* 3. *Pſal.* 122.

Leave vain things to the vain, and do thou attend to thoſe things which *God* hath commanded thee.

Shut the door upon thee, and call *unto* JESUS *thy beloved.*

Remain with *Him* in thy Cell, for thou ſhalt not find ſo great *peace* any where elſe.

If thou hadſt not gone abroad, nor hearkened to idle ſtories, thou hadſt continued in good *peace.*

But, becauſe thou art ſometimes delighted

delighted with hearing news, thou must needs suffer trouble of mind.

CHAP. XXI.

Of Compunction of heart.

1. IF thou wilt profit any thing, *Keep thy self in the fear of God*; *Prov.* 19. And be not too free, but awe all thy senses with the curb of discipline; and give not thy self to foolish mirth.

Give thy self to Compunction of heart, and thou shalt find devotion. Compunction gains much good, which Dissolution is wont quickly to destroy.

'Tis wonderful that a man who weighs and considers his banishment, and so many dangers of his soul, can heartily rejoyce at any time in this life!

2. THROUGH

2. THROUGH levity of heart, and neglect of our defects, we feel not the ſorrows of our ſoul; but, many times, we vainly laugh, when we have juſt cauſe to weep.

There is no *true liberty*, nor *good mirth*, but in the *fear of God*, with *a good conſcience.*

Happy is he who can caſt off all occaſion of diſtraction, and recollect himſelf to the union of holy compunction.

Happy is he who can deny himſelf whatſoever may defile, or burthen his conſcience.

Fight manfully: One cuſtom overcomes another.

If thou canſt forbear to intermedle with other men, they will not hinder thee in that which thou haſt to do.

3. BUSY *not thy ſelf with other mens*

mens matters, nor intangle thy self with the affairs of thy betters.

Have alwayes in the first place an eye to thy Self; and especially admonish thy self, before, or above any whom thou lovest best.

Be not grieved if thou hast not the favour of men, but take this to heart, that thou dost not carry thy self so well, and circumspectly, as becomes a servant of *God*, and a devout religious man to converse.

It is oftentimes better, and more secure for a man, not to have many consolations; especially, such as are according to the flesh.

Yet, that we have not divine comforts, or feel them seldom, is our own fault: because we labour not for compunction of heart, nor cast off vain and outward comforts, altogether. *Psal. 76.*

4. ACKNOWLEDG thy self unworthy

worthy of divine consolation, and rather deserving great tribulation.

When a man is perfectly compunct, then all the world is bitter, and troublesome to him.

A good man always finds sufficient cause of mourning, and weeping.

For, whether he considers himself, or weighs the state of his neighbour, he perceives, that none live here without tribulation.

And the more throughly he considers himself, the more he grieves.

Our sins and vices, wherein we are so plunged, that we can seldom contemplate heavenly things, afford us matter of just sorrow, and interiour compunction.

5. If thou didst oftner think of thy Death, than of Long-life, no doubt but thou wouldst be more fervent to amend thy self. *Eccles.* 7.

Also

Alſo, if thou didſt cordially conſider the pains of Hell, and of Purgatory; I believe, thou wouldſt willingly endure any labour and pain, and not fear any kind of auſterity. *Matt.* 25.

But, becauſe thoſe things pierce not the heart, and we ſtill love what delights us; therefore, we remain cold, and very ſlothful.

It is oftentimes want of *ſpirit*, that makes the miſerable body ſo quickly complain.

Pray therefore humbly to our *Lord*, that *he* may give thee the ſpirit of compunction, and ſay with the Prophet. *Feed me, ô Lord, with the bread of tears, and give me to drink of tears, in meaſure.* Pſal. 79.

CHAP

CHAP. XXII.

Of the consideration of Humane Misery.

1. MISERABLE thou art whereſoever thou art, and whitherſoever thou turneſt thy ſelf; unleſs thou turn thy ſelf to *God*.

Why art thou troubled becauſe all things anſwer not thy will and deſire?

Who is he that hath all things according to his will? Neither I, nor thou, nor any man upon earth.

No man, living in this world, is without ſome tribulation or affliction; be he King, or Pope. *Eccl. 6.*

Who is he that is beſt at eaſe? Surely, he that for *God* can ſuffer affliction.

2. MANY weak and frail men

say, O how fine a life such a man lives, how rich, how great, how powerful, how mighty is he? *Luc.* 12.

But lift up thine eyes to heavenly riches, and thou shalt see, that all these temporal things are nothing; and that they are very uncertain, and very burthensome, being never possest without care, and fear.

The happiness of a man consists not in having abundance of temporal things, but a mean sufficeth him. *Job.* 14. *Prov.* 1.

Truly, 'tis a misery, to live upon earth.

The more a man desires to be *spiritual*, the more bitter is this present life to him; because he perceives better, and sees more clearly the defects of humane corruption.

For, To eat, drink, watch, sleep, rest, labour, and to be subject to all

all other neceſſities of nature, is truly a great miſery, and affliction to a devout man; who would willingly be freed and delivered from all ſin.

3. FOR, The *inward* man is very much oppreſſed with the neceſſities of the body in this world.

Whereupon the Prophet devoutly prays, that he might be freed from thoſe neceſſities, ſaying, *Deliver me, ô Lord, from my neceſſities*, Pſal. 24.

But, Wo be to them that know not their own miſery, and more wo to them that love this miſerable and corruptible life.

For, Some there be that embrace it ſo cloſely (though with labouring, and begging, they ſcarce get neceſſaries,) that, if they could live here always, they would not care at all for the Kingdom of God.

4. O senseless people, and Infidels in heart, who lye buried so deep in earthly things, that they understand nothing but carnal things! But (miserable that they are!) in the end they shall find to their cost, that, what they loved, was vile, and a meer *Nothing*.

Whereas the Saints of *God*, and all the devout friends of *Christ*, looked not on those things which pleased the flesh, and flourished for a time; but with all their hope and intention panted after eternal blessings. 1 *Pet.* 1. *Heb.* 11.

Their whole desire aspired upwards to things everlasting and invisible, that the love of visible things might not draw them downwards to things here below.

O Brother, lose not thy confidence of going forward in *spirituality*; there is yet time, the hour is not

not yet paſt. *Rom.* 13. *Heb.* 10.

5. WHY wilt thou deferr thy reſolution from day to day?

Ariſe, begin this very *inſtant, and ſay, Now is the time to do, Now is the time to fight, Now is a fit time to amend,* 2 Cor. 6.

When thou art ill at eaſe, and much troubled; then is the time to merit.

Thou muſt paſs through fire and water, before thou canſt come to refreſhment. Pſal. 65.

Unleſs thou uſe violence to thy ſelf, thou ſhalt not overcome Vice.

As long as we carry about us this frail body, we cannot be without ſin, nor live without tediouſneſs, and grief. *Rom.* 3.

We would fain be quiet, and freed from all miſery; but, becauſe through ſin we have loſt Innocency,

therefore we have lost true Happiness. *Gen.* 3. 8.

Therefore it behoovs us to have patience, and to expect the mercy of God, till this iniquity *pass away, and mortality be swallowed up by life.*

6. O how great is human frailty, which is always inclined to evil!

To day thou confessest thy sins, to morrow thou dost commit them again. 2 *Macc.* 9.

Thou now resolvest to take heed; and an hour after, thou dost as if thou hadst made no resolution at all.

We may therefore justly humble our selves, and never have any great conceit of our selves, since we are so frail, and inconstant.

That may also soon be lost by negligence, which with much labour is hardly gained again by *grace.*

7. WHAT

7. WHAT will become of us in in the end, who ſo *ſoon* begin to grow cold?

Wo to us, if we thus decline to reſt, as if it were peace & ſecurity; when there doth not as yet appear the marks of true ſanctity in our converſation.

We have great need to be newly inſtructed again, like good Novices, to good manners; if perhaps there may be any hope of future amendment, and greater ſpiritual progreſs.

CHAP. XXIII.

Of the Meditation of Death.

1. DEATH will ſoon come upon thee: look therefore what condition thou art in. *Job.* 9. & 14. *Luk.* 12. *Heb.* 9.

To day a man, to morrow none; and, Out of ſight, out of mind.

O ſtupidity and hardneſs of mans heart, who thinks only of the preſent, and provides not for the future!

Thou ſhouldſt ſo order thy ſelf in all thy thoughts, and actions, as if this day, or preſently, thou wert to dye. *Matt.* 23.

If thou hadſt a good conſcience, thou wouldſt not much fear death. *Luk.* 12.

It is better to avoid ſin, than to flye death. *Wiſd.* 4.

If thou art not prepared to-day, How wilt thou be to-morow?

To-morrow is uncertain, and how knoweſt thou whether thou ſhalt live to ſee it, or no? *Mat.* 24. & 25.

2. WHAT avails it to live long, ſince we amend ſo little?

Ah!

Ah! Long-life doth not always mend us, but often encreaſeth our fault.

Would to *God* we had ſpent one day well in this world!

Many reckon the years of their converſion; but the fruit of amendment is often but ſmall.

If it be dreadful to die, it will be, perhaps, more dangerous to live longer.

Bleſſed is he, who hath always the hour of death before his eyes, and diſpoſeth himſelf daily to die. *Eccluſ.* 7.

If at any time thou haſt ſeen a man die, conſider that thou muſt paſs the ſame way.

3. In the morning, conceive thou maiſt not live till night; and when night comes, do not dare to promiſe thy ſelf the next morning.

Be therefore alwayes ready; and

ſo live, that death may never come upon thee unawares.

Many die ſuddenly, and when they little think of it.

For, *In the hour we leaſt imagin, the Son of man will come. Matt.* 24. *Luke* 21.

When that laſt hour ſhall come, thou wilt begin to have another opinion of thy whole life paſt, and be exceeding ſorry, that thou haſt been ſo remiſs and negligent.

4. How wiſe, and happy is he, who endeavours to be ſuch in his life, as he wiſheth to be found at his death!

For, The perfect contempt of the world, fervent deſire to profit in virtue, love of diſcipline, labour of penance, ready obedience, forſaking our ſelves, and bearing all adverſity patiently for the love of JESUS will give great confidence of dying happily. Many

Many good things thou maist do whilst thou art well; but, when thou art sick, I know not what thou canst do.

Few are amended by sickness; and those also who go much abroad, seldom become sanctified persons.

Trust not in thy friends and neighbours, nor deferre the health of thy soul to future times; for, men will sooner forget thee than thou dost imagin. *Esay* 30. & 31. *Jer.* 17. & 48.

It is better to provide now in time, and do some good before hand, than to rely on the help of others.

If thou beest not careful of thy Self now, who will be carefull for thee when thou art gone?

Time now is very precious, 1 *Cor.*6. But alas! that thou dost not spend it more profitably, by which thou mayest merit to live for ever.

The

The time will come when thou ſhalt deſire one day or hour to mend in; and, I know not whether it will be granted thee.

6. O moſt dearly beloved! From how great danger mayſt thou free thy ſelf, from how great fear deliver thy ſelf; if thou wouldſt now be alwayes fearful and expecting death?

Endeavour to live in ſuch a manner here, that thou mayſt rather rejoyce, than fear in the hour of death.

Learn now to die to the world, that then thou mayſt begin to live with Chriſt. *Rom.* 5.

Learn now to deſpiſe all things, that thou mayſt then freely go to Chriſt. *Luke* 14.

Chaſtize thy body now by penance, that Then thou mayſt have aſſured confidence. 1 *Cor.* 9.

7. AH!

7. AH *fool! Why doſt thou think to live long, when thou art not ſure of one day?* Luk. 12.

How many are deceived, and unexpectedly ſnatched out of this body?

How often haſt thou heard related, that ſuch a one was ſlain with a ſword, another drowned, another falling from on high broke his neck; this man, with eating was choked; that man, in playing got his end: Another by fire, another by weapon, another by plague, another murthered by thieves.

Thus death is the end of all, and the life of man paſſeth as a ſhadow.

8. *WHO will remember thee when thou art dead? or who will pray for thee? Job.* 14.

Do now (moſt dearly beloved) whatever thou canſt do, becauſe thou

thou knoweſt not when thou ſhalt die, and art ignorant what ſhall befall thee after death.

Whilſt thou haſt time, heap up to thy ſelf immortal riches. *Mat.* 6. *Luke* 12. *Gal.* 6.

Think of nothing but thy ſalvation; attend only to what belongs to *God.*

Make now thy ſelf friends by honouring the Saints of *God*, and imitating their lives: *that, when thou faileſt in this life, they may receive thee into eternal habitations.* Luk. 16. Heb. 1.

9. KEEP thy ſelf as a Pilgrim and a Stranger here upon earth: to whom the affairs of the world do nothing belong. 1 *Pet.* 2.

Keep thy heart free and elevated to *God*, becauſe thou haſt here no abiding City. *Heb.* 13.

Send thither thy daily prayer

and ſighs with tears; that thy ſoul may deſerve happily after death, to paſs to our *Lord. Amen.*

CHAP. XXIV.

Of Judgment, and the Puniſhment of ſins.

1. IN all things look unto thy end, and conſider how thou ſhalt ſtand before a ſevere Judge, to Whom nothing is hid, Who takes no bribes, nor receives excuſes; *but, what is juſt he will judg.*

O moſt miſerable and fooliſh ſinner, who ſometimes art afraid of the very look of an angry man, what wilt thou anſwer to *God*, who knows all thy wickedneſs? *Heb.* 9. *Luke* 16.

Why doſt thou not provide for thy ſelf againſt the Day of Judgment

ment, when no man ſhall be excuſed, or defended by another; but every one ſhall be a ſufficient burthen to himſelf?

Now thy labour is profitable, thy tears acceptable, thy groans will be heard, and thy ſorrow ſatisfactory, and purgative. 2 *Cor.* 6.

2. A Patient man hath a great and wholeſome Purgatory, who, receiving injuries, grievs more for others malice, than his own wrongs; who prays willingly for his adverſaries, and from his heart forgives offences: who delays not to ask forgiveneſs, who is ſooner moved to compaſſion than anger, who often uſeth violence to himſelf, and labours with his whole force to ſubdue the fleſh in all things to the ſpirit. *James* 1. *Acts.* 7.

It is better now to purge ſin, and cut down vice, than to reſerve them

them for future puniſhment.

We truly deceive our ſelves through the inordinate love which we bear to our fleſh.

3. WHAT other thing ſhall that fire devour but thy ſins? The more thou ſpareſt thy ſelf now, and followeſt the deſires of the fleſh; the more heavily ſhalt thou ſuffer hereafter, and a greater fewel ſhall be added to the flame.

In what ſins a man hath ſinned, in thoſe ſhall he be more grievouſly puniſhed.

There the ſlothful ſhall be pricked forward with burning goads; the gluttonous tormented with extreme hunger, and thirſt: there the luxurious, and lovers of pleaſures ſhall be covered with burning pitch, and ſtinking brimſtone; and the envious like mad-dogs ſhall howl for grief.

4. THERE

4. THERE ſhall be no vice which ſhall not have its peculiar and proper puniſhment.

There, the proud ſhall be filled with confuſion, and the covetous puniſhed with miſerable want.

There, one hour of ſuffering will be more painful than an hundred years of moſt ſharp penance in this world.

There, is no reſt, nor comfort for the damned.

Here, there is ſometimes interміſſion of labour, and we enjoy the comfort of our friends. *Job.* 4. 41.

Be now ſollicitous, and ſorrowful for thy ſins, that in the day of Judgment thou mayſt be ſecure with the bleſſed.

FOR, *then ſhall the juſt ſtand with great conſtancy againſt thoſe that afflicted and oppreſſed them.* Wiſ. 5.

Then, ſhall he ſtand to judg, who now

now humbly submits himself to the judgment of men.

Then, the poor and humble shall have great confidence; and the proud, fear on every side.

5. THEN, it will appear that he was wise in this world, who had learned for *Christs* sake to be a fool, and despised.

Then, all tribulation patiently suffered, will delight us; *and all iniquity stop her mouth*, Psal. 106.

Then, shall the devout rejoyce, and the prophane mourn. 2 *Cor.* 4.

Then, mortified flesh shall more exsult, than if it had always been pamper'd with delights.

Then, shall the poor garment shine, and the precious robe become sullied.

Then, shall the poor Cottage be more commended than the rich Palace.

Then,

Then, constant patience shall more avail us, than all the power in the world.

6. THEN, simple obedience will be preferred, before all worldly craft.

Then, shall a good and pure Conscience cause more joy, than learned Philosophy.

Then, shall the contempt of riches weigh more than all worldly treasures.

Then, wilt thou be more comforted, that thou hast prayed devoutly, than that thou hast fared daintily: then, wilt thou more rejoyce that thou hast been silent, than that thou hast talked much: Then, will thy holy works be of greater value, than many fair words.

Then, will a strict life, and hard penance, be more pleasing than all earthly delights.

Learn

Learn now to ſuffer a little, that thou mayeſt then be delivered from more grievous pains.

Prove firſt here, what thou art able to do hereafter.

If thou canſt now endure little, how wilt thou be able to ſuffer eternal torments? if now ſo little ſuffering make thee impatient, what will hell fire do hereafter?

Verily, thou canſt not have two Paradiſes; thou canſt not glut thy ſelf with delights in this world, and afterwards reign with *Chriſt*.

7. IF thou hadſt lived always till this day, in honours and pleaſures, what would it avail thee if it happen that thou ſhouldſt now inſtantly die? *Luke* 11.

All is vanity, therefore, but to love God, and to ſerve him only. Eccleſ. 1.

For, whoſoever *loves God* with his

his whole heart is not afraid of death, or punishment, or judgment, or hell, since *perfect love* gives secure access to *God Rom.* 8.

But 'tis no marvail, if he who is delighted with Sin, be afraid of Death, and Judgment.

Yet it is good (if love cannot reclaim thee from sin) that the fear of hell at least may restrain thee.

But he who lays aside the fear of *God*, cannot continue long in good state, but will quickly fall into the snares of the Devil.

CHAP. XXV.

Of the present Amendment of our whole life.

1. BE watchful and diligent in the service of *God*, and consider often with thy self, to what

end thou cameſt, and why thou didſt leave the world. 1 *Tim.* 4.

Was it not that thou mighteſt live to God, and become a ſpiritual man?

Be fervent therefore to profit; for, thou ſhalt ſhortly receive the reward of thy labours; *and then there ſhall be no more fear or grief in thy coaſts.* Matt. 5.

Thou ſhalt labour here a while, and thou ſhalt reap great Reſt, yea, and perpetual joy. *Eccluſ.* 51. *Apoc.* 21. & 22.

If thou doſt continue faithful, and fervent in working, *God* without doubt will be faithful and bountiful in rewarding.

Thou oughtſt to have a good hope of getting the victory; but muſt not be in ſecurity of it, leſt thou grow negligent, or proud.

2. WHEN a certain man being anxious

anxious, and often wavering between hope and fear, on a time oppreſſed with grief, had proſtrated himſelf in *prayer* before the Altar, he revolved thus in his mind, ſaying: O, if I knew that I ſhould yet perſevere! And he preſently heard interiourly the divine anſwer: What if thou didſt know it, what wouldſt thou do? Do now what thou wouldſt then do, and thou ſhalt be happy, and ſecure: and preſently being comforted and ſtrengthened, he committed himſelf to the *Divine Will*, and the anxious wavering ceaſed, and he had no mind curiouſly to ſearch further what might befall him, but rather ſtudied to diſcover *the perfect and acceptable will of God*, for the beginning and perfecting every good work. *Rom.* 5.

3. HOPE *in our Lord, and do good,*

good (ſaith the Prophet); *dwell in the land, and thou ſhalt be fed with the riches thereof*, Pſal. 36.

One thing there is which deterreth many from the progreſs in virtue, and the diligent amendment of their lives, (to wit) the dread of difficulties, and the labour of the combat.

But truly they, above all others, profit moſt in virtue, who moſt ſtoutly endeavour to overcome thoſe things which are moſt grievous, and contrary to them.

For, there a man profits more, and merits greater *grace*, where he moſt overcomes himſelf, and mortifies himſelf in *ſpirit*.

4. But all men have not alike to overcome, and mortify: yet he that is zealous to advance in virtue, will profit more, though he have more paſſions to overcome, than

another that hath fewer paſſions, and leſs fervour to virtue.

Two things eſpecially conduce much to amendment (to wit) To withdraw our ſelves violently from that to which Nature is viciouſly inclined, and to labour fervently for that good we have moſt need of.

Endeavour alſo to avoid and overcome with great diligence, thoſe things in thy ſelf, which do moſt diſpleaſe thee in others.

5 MAKE thy profit on all occaſions; ſo as if thou doſt hear or ſee any good examples, ſtir up thy ſelf to imitation thereof:

But if thou ſeeſt any thing worthy of reproof, take heed thou commit not the ſame; or, if thou at any time haſt done it, labour preſently to amend it.

As thine eye obſerves others, ſo art thou alſo noted again by others. *Matth.* 7.

O how ſweet and pleaſant a a thing it is, To ſee brethren ſerven and devout, well-manner'd and diſciplined! 1 *Cor.* 12.

On the contrary, how grievous and pitiful to ſee diſorderly livers, who practiſe not the things to which they are called!

How hurtful is it to neglect the purpoſe of our vocation, and buſy our ſelves in things that belong not to us!

6. BE mindful of the reſolution thou haſt made, and put before thine eyes the Image of the *Crucifix.*

Thou mayſt well be aſhamed, beholding the life of *JESUS Chriſt*, ſeeing thou haſt not as yet more earneſtly endeavoured to conform thy ſelf to Him, though thou haſt been a long time in the way of the ſervice of *God.*

A Religious man who exerciſes

ſelf ſeriouſly and devoutly in the moſt holy life and paſſion of our *Lord*, ſhall there abundantly find whatſoever is neceſſary and profitable for him; neither need he ſeek for any thing better out of *JESUS*.

O if *JESUS* crucified did but come into our hearts, how ſufficiently learned ſhould we be in a ſhort time!

7. A fervent religious man takes and bears all things well that are commanded him.

A cold and negligent religious perſon hath tribulation upon tribulation, and is on all ſides afflicted, becauſe he wants inward comfort, and is forbidden to ſeek any without.

A Religious, not living in diſcipline, is in great danger of the ruin of his ſoul.

Whoſoever ſeeks for liberty and eaſe,

eaſe, ſhall alwayes live in diſquiet; for one thing or other will always diſpleaſe him.

8. How do ſo many other Religious, who live under the ſtrict rule of Monaſtical diſcipline?

They ſeldom go abroad, live retiredly, feed very meanly, labour much, ſpeak little, watch long, riſe early, ſpend much time in *prayer*, read often, and keep themſelves in all kind of diſcipline.

Conſider the Carthuſians and Ciſtercians, and the Monks and Nuns of divers Orders, how they riſe every night to ſing praiſes to *God*; and therefore it would be very unſeemly, that thou ſhouldſt be ſlothful in ſo holy a work, where ſo great a multitude of Religious begin to praiſe *God* in all gladneſs of heart.

9. O that we had nothing elſe to do, but with our whole heart and mouth to praiſe our *Lord God*!

O that thou didſt never need to eat or drink, or ſleep; but couldſt alwayes praiſe *God*, and imploy thy ſelf only in ſpiritual exerciſes! thou ſhouldſt then be more happy than now, whilſt through ſuch like neceſſities thou ſerveſt the body.

Would to *God* theſe neceſſities were not at all, but only the ſpiritual refections of the ſoul, which alas we taſte too ſeldom.

10. WHEN a man comes to this point, that he ſeeks his comfort from no creature, then doth he begin firſt to reliſh *God* perfectly, then will he alſo be well content with all events.

Then will he neither rejoyce in great matters, nor be ſorrowful in ſmall;

ſmall; but wholy, and confidently commit himſelf to *God*, who is unto him *All* in *All*, to whom alſo nothing periſheth or dies, but all things live unto *him*, and ſerve *him* at a beck, without delay. *Rom.* 11. & 1. 1 *Cor.* 8. 12. & 15.

11. Be alwayes mindful of thy end, and how loſt time never returns.

Without care and diligence thou ſhalt never gain virtues. *Eccl.* 7. *Apoc.* 3.

If thou begin to wax cold, it will go ill with thee; but if thou give thy ſelf to fervour of *ſpirit*, thou ſhalt find great *peace*, and through the *grace of God*, and love of virtue, wilt feel leſs labour.

A fervent and diligent man is ready for all things.

It is a harder task to reſiſt vices, and paſſions, than to toyl in bodily labours.

He that ſhuns not ſmall faulss, by little and little runs into greater.

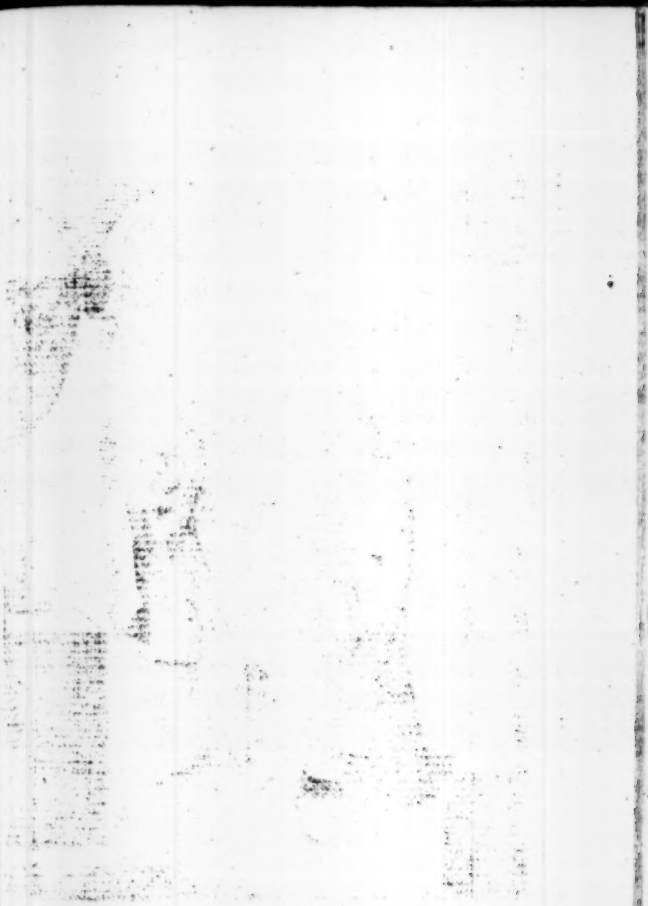
Thou wilt always rejoyce in the Evening, if thou ſpend the day well. *Eccl.* 19.

Be watchful over thy ſelf, ſtir up thy ſelf, admoniſh thy ſelf, and whatſoever becomes of others, neglect not thy ſelf. *Matt.* 11.

The greater violence thou uſeſt againſt thy ſelf, the more ſhalt thou profit. *Amen.*

The End of the First Book.

THE



We will goe into the House of our Lord. Psal. 121. 1.

THE SECOND BOOK OF THE IMITATION OF *CHRIST.*

CHAP. I.

Of Internal Converſation.

1. THE *Kingdom of God is within you*, ſaith our Lord, *Luke* 17. Convert thy ſelf with thy whole heart unto the *Lord*: Leave this miſera-

miſerable world, and thy ſoul ſhall find *reſt. Joel.* 2.

Learn to contemn outward things, and give thy ſelf to *inward* things, and thou ſhalt perceive the Kingdom of *God* to come into thee.

For the Kingdom of God is peace and joy in the Holy-Ghoſt, Rom. 14. which is not given to the ungodly.

Chriſt will come unto thee, and ſhew thee *His* comfort, if thou prepare *him* a worthy manſion within thee.

All his glory and beauty is within, and there he pleaſeth himſelf. *Pſal.* 44.

He often viſits the *internal* man, and hath pleaſing diſcourſes, delightful conſolations, much peace, and much-to-be-admired familiarity with him.

2. Go to, faithful ſoul! Prepare thy

thy heart for thy *Spouse*, that *He* may vouchsafe to come to thee, and dwell in thee; for so he saith, *If any one love me, he will keep my word; and we will come to him and make our abode with him*, Joh. 14.

Give place to *Christ* therefore, and deny entrance to all others.

When thou hast *Christ*, thou art rich; and *he* will suffice thee.

He will provide for thee, and be thy faithful assistant in all things, so that thou needest not trust to any. *Joh.* 4.

For, Men are quickly changed, and decay suddenly; but Christ remains for ever, and stands firmly to the end.

3. THERE is no great trust to be put in a mortal man, though he be advantagious and dear to thee; neither must thou be sad, if he somtimes cross and contradict thee. *Jer.* 17. Those

Thoſe, who to day are with thee, to morrow may be againſt thee; ſo, on the contrary ſide, they often change like the wind.

Put thy whole truſt in GOD, and let *him* be thy Fear, and thy Love: *He* will anſwer for thee, and do all that is beſt. 1 *Pet.* 5.

Thou haſt not here a permanent City, & whereſoever thou art, thou art a ſtranger and pilgrim, nor ſhalt thou ever have *Reſt*, unleſs thou be intimely united to *Chriſt*. *Heb.* 13. *Phil.* 5.

4. WHY doſt thou gaze about here, ſince this is not the place of thy Reſt?

In heaven muſt be thy dwelling, and all earthly things are to be regarded as in a paſſage.

All things paſs away, and thou together with them, Wiſd. 5.

Beware thou cleave not to them, leſt

leſt thou be inthralled by them, and periſh.

Let thy thought be upon the Moſt-High, and thy prayer directed to *Chriſt* without intermiſſion.

If thou canſt not contemplate high and heavenly things, reſt on the Paſſion of *Chriſt*, and dwell willingly in *his* moſt ſacred wounds.

For, if thou flye devoutly to the wounds and precious marks of *JESUS*, thou ſhalt feel great comfort in tribulation: neither wilt thou much care for the contempts of men, and wilt eaſily bear the words of ſlanderous tongues.

5. *CHRIST* alſo was deſpiſed in the world by men, and in great neceſſities, and forſaken by *his* acquaintants and friends, in the midſt of ſlanders and ſcorns. *Matt.* 12.26. *Joh.* 1.5.

Chriſt would ſuffer, and be deſpiſed:

ſpiſed; and dar'ſt thou complain of any one?

Chriſt had adverſaries, and backbiters, and wouldſt thou have all men to be thy friends and benefactors?

How ſhall thy patience be crowned, if no adverſity happen to thee?

How wilt thou be the friend of *Chriſt*, if thou wilt endure no contradictions?

Suffer with *Chriſt*, and for *Chriſt*, if thou wilt reign with *Chriſt*.

6. IF thou hadſt once perfectly entered into the *interiour* of JESUS, and felt a little of his burning love; then thou wouldſt not care at all for thine own conveniences, or inconveniences, but wouldſt rejoyce at affronts offered thee.

For, The *love* of JESUS makes a man deſpiſe himſelf.

A

A *Lover* of *JESUS*, and of *Truth*, and a true internal man, and free from inordinate affections; can freely turn himself to *God*, and lift himself above himself in *spirit*; and, injoying *Him*, rest in peace.

7. HE that savours all things as they are (not as they are said, and esteemed to be) is truly wise, and rather taught by *God* than Men.

He who knows how to guide himself from *within*, and little values outward things; seeks not for places, nor waits for times, for performing of devout exercises. *Esay* 64.

An internal man soon recollects himself, because he never pours out himself wholy upon *O*utward things.

He is not hindered by exteriour labour, or necessary business for a time; but, as things fall out, so he frames himself to them.

He

He that is well ordered and disposed within, heeds not the strange and perverse carriages of men.

The more a man draws things to himself, the more is he hindered and distracted.

8. IF all were right with thee, and thou wert throughly purged, all things would fall out for thy good and profit.

Many things often trouble, and displease thee; because thou art not perfectly dead to thy self, nor free from affection to all earthly things.

Nothing so defiles and entangles the heart of man, as impure *love* to creatures.

If thou refuse outward comforts, thou wilt be able to contemplate heavenly things, and often rejoyce inwardly.

CHAP.

CHAP. II.

Of humble ſubmiſſion under the government of a Prelate.

1. REGARD not much who is with thee, nor who is againſt thee; but let this be thy buſineſs and care, to procure that *God* may be with thee in all thou doſt, and that thou mayſt keep a good conſcience: and then, *God* will ſufficiently defend thee: For, whom *God* will help, no man's malice can hurt. *Rom.* 8. 1 *Cor.* 4. *Pſal.* 27.

If thou canſt ſuffer, and hold thy peace, without doubt thou ſhalt ſee that our *Lord* will help thee.

He knows the time and manner how to deliver thee, thou muſt therefore reſign thy ſelf unto him.

It belongs to *God* to help, and free from all confuſion.

It doth ſometimes much conduce towards the conſervation of humility, that others know, and reprehend our faults. *James* 3.

2. WHEN a man humbles himſelf for his faults, he eaſily pacifieth others, and ſoon aſſwageth their anger againſt him. *Job.* 3.

God protects and delivers the *humble*, *he loves* and comforts the *humble*, *he* inclines to the *humble* man: to the *humble*, *he* imparts great *grace*, and after his depreſſion *he* raiſeth him to glory. *Matth.* 11.

To the humble he reveals his ſecrets; and draws, and invites him ſweetly to Himſelf.

The *humble* man receiving contumely and confuſion is in great *peace*, becauſe he relies on *God*, not on the world.

Do not conceive thou haſt pro-

fited

fited any thing, unleſs thou eſteem thy ſelf inferiour to all.

CHAP. III.

Of a Peaceable man.

1. PUT thy ſelf firſt in *peace*, and then thou mayſt pacify others.

A Peaceable man doth more good, than one that is very learned.

A Paſſionate man turns good into evil, and eaſily believes the worſt.

A good Peaceable man turns all things to good.

He that is truly in *peace* is not ſuſpicious of any; but he that is diſcontented and troubled, is toſſed with divers ſuſpicions: neither is he quiet in himſelf, nor ſuffers others to be quiet. 1 *Cor.* 13.

He

He ſaith often that which he ſhould not, and omits that which is more expedient for him to do.

He conſiders what others are bound to do; and neglects what he is bound to do himſelf. *Matt.* 17. *Acts* 1.

Have therefore in the firſt place a careful zeal over thy ſelf, and then thou mayſt juſtly be zealous of thy neighbour.

2. THOU knoweſt well enough how to excuſe and colour thy own deeds, and wilt not receive the excuſes of others. *Gal.* 6.

It were more juſt that thou didſt accuſe thy Self, and excuſe thy Brother.

If thou wilt be born withal, bear alſo with another. 1 *Cor.* 13.

Lo, how far thou art yet from true *charity* and *humility*, which knows not how to diſdain or be angry

angry with any but himself.

It is no great matter to converse with good and mild people; for, this naturally pleaseth all, and every one would willingly have *peace*, and do love those best that agree with them.

But to be able to live peaceably with the harsh and perverse, or disorderly, or such as contradict us; is a great *grace*, and very commendable, and a manly deed.

3. SOME there be who keep themselves in *peace*, and have *peace* also with others.

And there are some who are neither at *peace* in themselves, nor suffer others to be in *peace*: they are troublesome to others, but always more troublesome to themselves.

And some there be who keep themselves in *peace*, and labour to bring others to *peace*.

But

But all our *peace* in this life conſiſts more in humble ſuffering, than in not feeling adverſities.

He who knows beſt how to ſuffer, will enjoy moſt *peace*: ſuch an one is a conquerour of himſelf, and a Lord of the world; a Friend of Chriſt, and Heir of heaven.

CHAP. IV.

Of a pure Mind, and ſimple Intention.

1. WITH two wings man is lifted up above earthly things, with *ſimplicity* and *purity*.

Simplicity muſt be in the Intention, and *Purity* in the Affection.

Simplicity intends *God*; *Purity* apprehends, and taſts *him*.

No good action will hinder thee, if thou be free from inordinate affections.

If thou intend and ſeek no other thing, but the good pleaſure of *God*, and the profit of thy neighbour, thou ſhalt enjoy internal liberty.

If thy heart were right, then every creature would be to thee, a looking-glaſs of life, and a book of holy doctrine.

There is no creature ſo ſmall and abject, that repreſents not the goodneſs of *God*. *Rom.* 1.

2. IF thou wert good and *pure* within, then wouldſt thou be able to diſcern, and take all things well without impediment.

A *pure* heart penetrates heaven, and hell.

According as every one is *interiourly*, ſo he judgeth exteriourly.

If there be (any) joy in the world, ſurely a man of a *pure* heart poſſeſſeth it.

If there be any-where tribulation and affliction; an evil conſcience muſt needs feel it.

As iron, put into the fire, loſeth the ruſt, and becoms fiery glowing; So a man, wholy converting himſelf to *God*, becomes fervent, and is changed into a new man.

3. WHEN a man begins to grow cold, then he is afraid of ſmall labours, and willingly receives outward conſolations.

But when he begins perfectly to overcome himſelf, and to walk manfully in the way of *God*, then doth he eſteem thoſe things but leight, which before were heavy to him.

CHAP.

CHAP. V.

Of the consideration of our Selves.

1. WEE cannot much trust to our selves, because we often want *grace*, and understanding.

There is but little *light* in us, and that we quickly lose, through negligence. *Jer.* 17.

Many times also we perceive not our inward blindness.

Many times we do ill, and, which is worse, we excuse it.

Sometimes we are moved with passion, and take it to be zeal.

We reprehend small things in others, and pass over great things in our selves. *Psal.* 140.

We quickly feel, and weigh what we suffer from others; but we mind not, what others suffer from us. *Mat.* 7.

He that would well and duly consider his own deeds, would find no reaſon to judg hardly of another.

2. AN *internal* man prefers the Care of Himſelf before all other cares. *Matt.* 16.

And he that looks diligently to himſelf, eaſily holds his peace of others.

Thou wilt never be *internal* and devout, unleſs thou paſs over with ſilence other mens matters, and have a ſpecial eye to thine own ſelf.

If thy mind be wholy on *God*, and thy Self; thou wilt little be moved with what thou ſeeſt abroad. 1 *Cor.* 4.

Where art thou, when thou art not preſent to thy ſelf?

When thou haſt run over all, what haſt thou profited, if thou neglect thy ſelf? *Gal.* 6.

If thou wilt (as thou oughteſt) enjoy

enjoy *true peace* and *union*, thou must lay all the world aside, and look only to thy self.

3. THOU wilt profit much, if thou wilt keep thy mind free from all temporal cares.

Thou wilt fail exceedingly, if thou esteeem any temporal thing.

Let nothing be high, nothing great, nothing pleasant, nothing acceptable to thee, but *purely God*, or what is from *God*.

Esteem all comfort vain which thou receivest from any creature. *Eccl.* 1.

A Soul that loves *God*, despiseth all that is under Him.

God alone is eternal, immense, and filling all places; is the comfort of the soul, and *true* joy of the heart.

CHAP. VI.

Of the joy of a good Conſcience.

1. THE glory of a good man is the teſtimony of a good Conſcience. 1 *Cor.* 1.

Keep a good conſcience, and thou ſhalt alwayes have joy. *Wiſd.* 17.

A good conſcience can bear very much, and is very joyful in adverſities.

An evil conſcience is always fearful, and unquiet.

Thou ſhalt reſt ſweetly, if thy heart do not reprehend thee.

Rejoyce not, but when thou haſt done well.

Sinners have never *true* joy, nor feel *true inward peace:*

Becauſe, *There is no peace to the wicked*, ſaith the Lord, *Iſay* 48. *Luke* 10.

And

And if they ſhould ſay, *We are in peace, and no evil will fall upon us, who ſhall dare to hurt us?* Believe them not, for *upon a ſudden the wrath of God ſhall riſe, and their deeds ſhall be turned into nothing & their conceits ſhall periſh*, Iſay 37.

2. TO glory in tribulation, is not hard to him that *loves*; for, ſo to glory, is, to glory in the Croſs of our *Lord. Rom.* 8. *Gal.* 6.

That glory is ſhort, which is given and received from men.

Grief ever waits on the glory of the world. *Joh.* 5.

The glory of good men is in their conſciences, not in the tongues of men, 2 Cor. 5.

The gladneſs of the juſt is from *God*, and in *God*; and their joy is of the *Truth*.

He that deſires true and everlaſting glory, cares not for temporal.

He that ſeeks temporal glory, or doth not from his heart contemn it, is convinced to have but little love for heavenly glory.

He hath great quiet of mind who cares not for praiſes, or diſpraiſes.

3. He whoſe conſcience is pure, will eaſily be content, and pacified.

Thou art not more holy for being praiſed, nor worſe if diſpraiſed.

What thou art, That thou art; neither oughteſt thou to be accounted greater than what thou art in the ſight of *God*.

If thou conſider well what thou art *within*, thou wilt not care what men ſay of thee abroad. 1 *King.* 16.

Man beholds the face, but God ſees the heart.

Man conſiders the actions, but *God* weighs the intentions.

To do always well, and eſteem little

little of thy ſelf, is a ſign of an humble mind.

To refuſe comfort from any creature, is a token of great *purity*, and *interiour* confidence.

4. IT is evident, that he who ſeeks no outward witneſs for himſelf, hath committed himſelf wholy to God.

For, not he who commends himſelf (ſaith St. *Paul*) *is approved, but he whom God commends.* 2 Cor. 10.

To walk *interiourly* with *God*, and not to be poſſeſſed with any outward affection, is the ſtate of an internal man.

CHAP. VII.

Of the Love of JESUS *above all things.*

1. BLeſſed is he who underſtands what it is to *love* JESUS, and to deſpiſe himſelf for JESUS.

One beloved thing muſt be left for another, becauſe JESUS alone will be beloved above all things. *Pſal.* 118.

The love of a creature is deceitful and unconſtant.

The *love* of JESUS, is faithful and perſeverant.

Whoſoever cleaveth to a creature, ſhall fall with that which is ſubject to fall.

Whoſoever embraceth JESUS, ſhall ſtand firmly for ever.

Love him, and keep *him* for thy friend, who, when all goes away, will

will not leave thee, nor suffer thee to perish in the end, *Matth.* 12.

2. THOU must at last be separated from all creatures, whether thou wilt or no.

Cleave fast to JESUS, living and dying; and commit thy self to His trust, who, when all fails, can only assist thee.

Thy *Beloved* is of such a nature, that *he* will have no partner, but will have thy *heart* alone, and sit in it like a King in his own throne.

If thou didst know well, how to free thy self from all creatures, JESUS would willingly dwell with thee.

What trust soever thou puttest in any besides JESUS, is all no better than lost.

Do not trust and rely on a reed shaken with every puff of wind: for, *All flesh is hay, and the glory*

thereof ſhall wither away as the flower of the field, Iſay 40.

3. THOU ſhalt ſoon be deceived, if thou regardeſt only mens outward appearance.

If thou ſeek comfort and profit in worldly things, thou ſhalt often loſe by it.

If, in all, thou ſeek JESUS, thou ſhalt ſurely find JESUS.

If thou ſeek thy ſelf, thou ſhalt alſo find thy ſelf, but to thine own ruine.

For, Man hurts himſelf more by not ſeeking JESUS; than the whole world, and all his enemies beſides do, or can.

CHAP.

CHAP. VIII.

Of familiar Friendſhip with JESUS.

1. WHen JESUS is preſent, all is well, and nothing ſeems difficult:

But, when JESUS is abſent, every thing is hard.

When JESUS ſpeaks not within us, our comfort is poor:

But if JESUS ſpeak but only one word, we abound with conſolation.

Did not *Mary Magdalene* preſently riſe from the place where ſhe wept, when *Martha* ſaid to her, *The Maſter is here, and calls thee.* Joh. 13?

A happy hour! when JESUS calls from tears to joy of *ſpirit.* *Matt.* 16.

How dry and hard art thou without JESUS? how fooliſh, and vain if thou deſireſt any thing out of JESUS? Is not this a greater dammage

dammage than to loſe the whole world?

2. WHAT can the world profit thee, without JESUS?

To be without JESUS is a grievous Hell, and to be with JESUS is a ſweet Paradiſe. *Rom.* 8.

If JESUS be with thee, no enemy can hurt thee.

Whoſoever finds JESUS, finds a a good treaſure; yea, a Good above all goods. *Mar.* 13.

And he that loſeth JESUS, loſeth too much, and more than the whole world, *Luke* 2.

He is extreme poor, who lives without JESUS; and he is exceeding rich, who is well with JESUS.

3. IT is great skill to know, how to converſe with JESUS; and great wiſdom to know, how to keep Him.

Be

Be *humble* and *peaceable*, and JESUS will be with thee.

Be devout and quiet, and JESUS will remain with thee.

Thou mayst soon drive away JESUS, and lose his grace, if thou decline to outward things.

And if thou drive *him* from thee, and lose *him*, To whom then wilt thou fly? and, whom then wilt thou seek, for thy friend?

Thou canst not well live without a friend; and, if JESUS be not thy friend above all, thou wilt be too sorrowful and desolate.

Thou dost then foolishly, if thou trust and rejoyce in any other.

It is better that the whole world be against thee, than JESUS be offended with thee. *Gal. 6.*

Of all therefore that are dear to thee, let JESUS alone be thy special Beloved.

4. ALL

4. ALL things are to be loved for JESUS; and JESUS only, is to be loved for himſelf.

JESUS only is eſpecially to be loved, who alone above all friends is found good and faithful.

For *Him*, and in *Him*, let all (as well foes as friends) be dear to thee.

And theſe are all to be prayed for, that they all may know and *love Him*. *Matt.* 5.

Never deſire to be ſingularly praiſed or beloved; for, that appertaineth to *God* alone, who hath none like unto Himſelf. *Luke* 6.

Neither deſire that the heart of any ſhould be ſet on thee:

Nor do thou ſet thy heart on the love of any; but let JESUS be in thee, and in every good man.

Keep thy heart pure and free from captivity to any creature.

5. THOU

5. THOU muſt be naked and *pure in heart* in the ſight of *God*, *if thou wilt attend and ſee how ſweet our Lord is.*

And truly thou ſhalt never attain to this, unleſs thou be prevented and drawn by *his grace*, that all being emptied and diſmiſſed, thou alone mayſt be united to *Him Alone.*

For when the grace of God comes into man, then he is powerful for all things; and when it retires, then ſhall he be poor and weak, left as it were only to ſtripes.

When this happens, thou muſt not deſpair or be dejected, but reſign thy ſelf to the *Will* of *God* with indifferency, and ſuffer all that ſhall befall thee for the glory of JESUS.

For, after winter follows ſummer, and the night being paſt, the day returns; and after a ſtorm cometh a calm.

CHAP.

CHAP. IX.

Of the want of all comfort.

1. IT is not hard, To deſpiſe humane comfort when we have *divine*.

But it is much, and very much, To be able to want all conſolation, both *divine* and humane, and to be willing for Gods honour to endure deſolation of heart, and to ſeek himſelf in nothing, nor to regard his own deſert.

What great matter is it, if thou be cheerful and devout at the coming of *grace*? This hour is wiſhed-for by all men.

He rides at eaſe that is carried by the *grace of God*.

What wonder, if he feel no burthen, who is born up by the Almighty, and led by the Soveraign-guide?

2. WE

2. We willingly receive ſome kind of comfort, and a man can hardly ſhake off himſelf.

The holy Martyr St. *Laurence* overcame the world with his Prieſt, becauſe he deſpiſed whatever ſeemed delightful in the world.

And, for the love of *Chriſt*, he alſo meekly ſuffered the high Prieſt of *God*, Pope *Sixtus*, to be taken away from him.

He overcame therefore the love of the creature, for the *love* of the *Creator*; and choſe rather the divine pleaſure than human comfort.

Do thou alſo learn to forſake ſome neceſſary thing, and a beloved friend for the *love of God*.

Do not take it grievouſly, to be forſaken by a friend; knowing that, at length, we ſhall be all ſeparated from one another.

3. A man must fight long, and much in himself before he can learn fully to overcome himself, and draw all his affections wholy unto *God*.

When a man trusts in himself, he easily slides into humane comforts.

But a *true lover of Christ*, and a diligent pursuer of Virtue, gives not himself to such solaces, nor seeks such sensible sweetnesses; but rather strong exercises, and to sustain hard labours, for *Christ*.

4. When therefore God gives spiritual comforts, receive them with thankfulness; but know, It is the gift of *God*, not thy merit.

Be not puffed up; joy not too much, nor presume vainly: but, be thou more humble for the *grace* received, and more wary and fearful in all thy actions, for that hour will pass away, and temptations will follow. When

When thou art deprived of comforts, do not preſently deſpair, but with humility and patience expect the heavenly Viſitation: for, *God* is able to return thee greater *grace* and comfort.

This is not new or ſtrange to thoſe that have experience in the wayes of *God*; for, in great Saints and ancient Prophets, there were, now-and-then, ſuch kind of alterations.

5. WHEREUPON, One (then repleniſhed with *grace*) ſaid: *In my abundance, I will not be moved for ever*, Pſal. 29.

But when *grace* was retired, he added what he found in himſelf, ſaying, *Thou turnedſt thy face from me, and I was troubled*, Pſal. 29.

Notwithſtanding, he doth not deſpair in the midſt of thoſe changes, but more earneſtly prayeth God; ſaying, *Unto thee, O Lord, will I cry, and*

and I will pray unto my God. Pſal. 29.

Laſtly, he receives the fruit of his prayer, and witneſſeth that he was heard, ſaying,

The Lord hath heard me, and taken pity upon me; The Lord is become my helper.

But wherein? *Thou haſt turned* (ſaith he) *my ſorrow into joy, and thou haſt encompaſſed me with gladneſs.*

And, if great Saints have been thus dealt withal; we who are poor and weak ought not to deſpair, though we be ſometimes hot, and ſometime cold.

For, *The ſpirit comes and goes according to his own good pleaſure.* Joh. 3.

Whereupon, bleſſed *Job* ſaith, *Thou doſt viſit him early in the morning, and ſuddenly doſt thou prove him.* Job. 7.

6. WHERE-

6. WHEREIN then ſhall I hope? or, In what ſhall I put my truſt? but only in the great mercy of *God*, and hope of heavenly *grace*?

For, whether I enjoy the preſence of good men, or devout brethren and faithful friends, or holy books, or learned treatiſes, or ſweet ſongs and hymns; All theſe help little, and ſavour little, when I am forſaken by *grace*, and left in mine own poverty. *Luke* 9.

At ſuch a time, there is no better remedy than patience, and reſignation to the will of *God*.

7. I never found any man ſo religious, but that ſometimes he was forſaken by *grace*, and felt a decay of fervor.

No Saint was ever ſo highly rapt or illuminated, who was not tempted firſt or laſt.

For

For, he is not worthy of the high contemplation of *God*, who for *God* hath not been exercised with some tribulation.

For, Temptation going before is wont to be a sign of ensuing comfort.

Since heavenly comfort is promised to those, who are proved by temptation.

Whoso shall overcome (saith he) *I will give him to eat of the tree of life.* Apoc. 2.

8. MOREOVER, divine comfort is given to make a man stronger to bear adversities; and temptations follow, lest he should grow proud of that grace.

The Devil sleeps not, neither is our flesh as yet dead.

Cease not herfore to prepare thy self to the battle; for, on the right hand, and on the left, are enemies that never rest.

CHAP.

Chap. X.

Of gratitude for the Grace of God.

1. WHy seekest thou Rest since thou wert born to Labour? *John.* 5.

Dispose thy selfe to patience rather than to comforts, and to bearing of the Cross rather than to Joy. *Luke.* 14.

What worldly person is there that would not willingly receive comfort and *spiritual* joy, if he could always obtain it?

For, Spiritual comforts exceed all the delights of the world and pleasures of the flesh.

For, All worldly delights are either vain or unclean; but *spiritual* delights are only pleasant and honest, produced by vertue, and infused by *God* into *pure* minds.

No

No man, notwithſtanding can always enjoy theſe divine conſolations at his own pleaſure, by reaſon that the time of temptation doth not long ceaſe.

2. FALSE liberty of mind and great confidence of our ſelves, are very oppoſite to divine viſitation.

God doth well in giving the grace of comfort; but man doth ill in not returning it again wholly to *God* with thankſgiving.

And this is the reaſon, why the gifts of *grace* cannot flow in us, becauſe we are ungrateful to the giver, and return them not wholly to the Head-fountain.

For *grace* is ever due to him who is worthily thankful: And, that ſhall be taken from the proud which is wont to be given to the humble

3. I deſire not that conſolation which

which robs me of compunction; nor do I affect that contemplation which leads to haughtineſs of mind.

For, all that is high, is not holy; nor every deſire, pure; nor all that is ſweet good; nor is every thing that is dear to us acceptable to God.

I willingly accept that *grace*, which makes me more humble, and fearful, and better diſpoſed to forſake my ſelf.

He who is taught by the gift of *grace*, and hath felt the ſcourge of wanting it, dares not attribute any good to himſelf, but rather will confeſs himſelf, poor and naked.

Give unto *God* what is His, and take to thy ſelf what is thine; that is, give *God* thanks for his *grace*, and eſteem nothing as thy own, but ſin and the puniſhment due to it.

4. Put thy ſelf always in the loweſt place, and the higheſt ſhall be

given thee; for, the higheſt ſtand
not without the loweſt.

The greateſt Saints in the ſight o
God, are the leaſt in their own op
nions; and the more glorious the
be, the more humble are they i
themſelves.

Being full of truth and heavenl
glory, they are not deſirous of vai
glory.

Being ſetled and grounded in *God*
they can in no ſort be proud.

And they who aſcribe all unt
God, what good ſoever they hav
received, ſeek not glory of one a
nother; but would have that glor
which is from *God* alone, and deſi
above all to praiſe *God* in Himſe
and all the Saints; and always ten
unto the ſame.

5. BEE thou grateful therefo
for the leaſt, and thou ſhalt be mad
worthy of the greater.

Le

Let the leaſt be to thee even as
ıe greateſt, and the moſt con-
mptible even as a ſpecial gift.

If thou conſider the worth of the
iver, no gift will ſeem little or of
ean eſteem.

For, nothing is little which is giv-
ı by the greateſt *God*.

Yea, though He give puniſhments
ıd ſtripes, yet ſhould it be grate-
ıl to us; for, whatſoever he per-
its to happen to us, is always for
ır ſalvation.

He then who deſires to keep the
ace of *God*, let him be thankful for
ace which is given, and patient
hen it is taken away.

Let him pray, that it may return,
ıd be wary and humble leſt he loſe

CHAP. XI.

Of the few lovers of the Croſs of JESUS.

1. JESUS hath now many lovers of *His* heavenly glory, but few bearers of *his Croſs*.

He hath many that love comforts but few that love tribulation.

He findes many companions of his table, but few of his abſtinence.

All deſire to rejoyce with JESUS, few are willing to ſuffer for *him*.

Many follow JESUS *to the breaking of Bread, but few to the drinking of the Cup of his Paſſion.* Luke. 9.22.

Many reverence *his* Miracles, but few follow the ignominy of the *Croſs*; many love JESUS, while they

they feel no adverſities.

Many promiſe and bleſs *him* as long as they receive comfort from *him*.

If JESUS hide himſelf and leave them a while, they either fall into murmuration, or into too much dejection.

2. But they who love JESUS for JESUS, and not for their own comfort, bleſs him no leſs in tribulation and anguiſh of heart, than in the higheſt comfort.

And if *he* ſhould never give them comfort, they would notwithſtanding always prayſe *him*, and always give *him* thanks.

3. O how powerful is the love of JESUS, not mixed with falſe love or proper intereſt!

Are not they all to be called hirelings, who always ſeek comforts?

Are they not convinced to be rather lovers of themſelves than of JESUS, who think always of their own profit and gain?

Where may ſuch an one be found as will ſerve God without hope of reward?

4. It is hard to find any one ſo ſpiritual, as to be naked from all things.

For, where ſhall we find a man truly poor in ſpirit, and naked from all creatures?

Far from hence and from the end of the world, is his price. Prov. 31.

If a man ſhould give all his wealth, yet is it nothing.

And though he perform great penance and auſterity, yet is it little.

And if he ſhould attain all knowledg, yet is he far off.

And, if he ſhould have attained great

great virtue and fervent devotion; yet, is there much wanting to him, to wit, One thing which is the most necessary of all for him. What is that?

That, having left all, he forsake himself, and wholy depart from himself, and retain no spark of self-love. *Matt.6.*

And when he shall have done all he knows to be done, let him think he hath done nothing.

5. LET him not weigh that much that may be much esteemed, but let him confess in *truth* that he is an unprofitable servant, according to that saying, of *truth When ye have done all that is commanded you, say, that ye are unprofitable servants.* Luke.17.

Then may he be truly poor and naked in *spirit*, and say with the Prophet, *I am all alone and poor.*

Yet no man is richer than he, no man more free, no man more powerful than he, who knows how to forsake himself, and all things else, and place himself in the lowest place.

Chap. XII.

Of the high-way of the holy Cross.

1. This speech seems hard to many, *Deny thy self, take up thy Cross, and follow* JESUS. Mat. 16.

But it will be much harder to hear that last word: *Go from me ye cursed into everlasting fire.* Mat. 25.

They who now willingly bear and follow the *Cross*, shall not then fear the sentence of eternal damnation.

This sign of the *Cross*, shall be in heaven

heaven, when our *Lord* shall come to Judgment.

Then all the servants of the *Cross*, who in their life-time conformed themselves to *Christ* crucified, shall draw neer unto *Christ* their Judg with great confidence.

2. WHY then dost thou fear to take up the *Cross* which leads to a Kingdom?

In the *Cross* is health, in the *Cross* is life, in the *Cross* is protection from enemies, in the *Cross* is infusion of spiritual sweetness, in the *Cross* is strength of mind, in the *Cross* is joy of spirit, in the *Cross* is height of virtue, in the *Cross* is perfection of sanctity.

There is no health of soul nor hope of everlasting life, but in the Cross.

Take up therefore thy *Cross*, and follow JESUS, and thou shalt go

into everlasting life.

He went before, bearing his own *Cross*; and dyed for thee on the *Cross*, that thou mightest always bear the *Cross*, and desire to dy on the *Cross*; for, if thou dyest with *him*, thou shalt also live with him:

And if thou art his companion in pain, thou shalt also be his companion in glory.

3. BEHOLD! In the *Cross* is all, all consists in dying; and there is no other way to life and to true *inward peace*, but the way of the *Cross* and daily mortification.

Go where thou wilt, seek what thou wilt, and thou shalt not find a higher way above, nor a safer way below, than the way of the holy *Cross*.

Dispose and order all things according to thy will and judgment, yet shalt thou ever suffer somewhat either

either willingly or unwillingly, and so thou shalt still find the *Cross*.

For either thou shalt feel pain in thy body, or sustain in thy soul tribulation of *spirit*.

4. THOU shalt be sometimes forsaken of *God*, and sometimes provoked by thy neighbour, and which is more thou shalt often be irksome to thy self.

Neither canst thou be delivered or eased by any remedy or comfort; but, thou must undergo it, as long as shall please *God*.

For, *God* would have thee learn to suffer tribulation without comfort, that thou mayest submit thy self wholly to Him, and become more humble by tribulation.

No man feels the Passion of Christ so lively, as he who hath occasion to suffer the like.

The Cross therefore is always ready,

ready, and expects thee every where.

Thou canſt not eſcape it whitherſoever thou go; for, whereſoever thou goeſt, thou carrieſt thy ſelf with thee, and ſhalt always find thy ſelf.

Turn thy ſelf to things above thee and below thee, without and within thee, and in all theſe thou ſhalt find the *Croſs*.

And every-where thou muſt of neceſſity have patience, if thou wilt have inward peace and deſerve an everlaſting Crown.

5. If thou doſt bear the Croſs willingly, it will bear thee and guide thee to thy deſired end; to wit, where there ſhall be an end of ſuffering, though there be none here.

If thou bear it unwillingly, thou makeſt it burthenſome, and much more

more heavy to thee, nevertheless thou must endure it.

If thou cast away one *Cross*, thou wilt certainly find another, and perhaps a heavier.

6. THINK'ST thou to escape that which no man could ever escape?

What Saint was there ever in the world without his Cross and affliction?

Our Lord JESUS CHRIST himself, was not one hour of his life without suffering.

For, It behooved, that Christ should suffer, and rise from death, and so enter into glory. Luke. 24.

And how dost thou seek another way than this Royal way which is the way of the Cross?

7. THE whole life of *Christ* was a Cross and Martyrdom; and, Dost thou

thou ſeek joy and reſt for thy ſelf?

Thou erreſt, thou erreſt, if thou ſeek any other thing than to ſuffer tribulation: for, this mortal life is full of miſeries, and ſigned round about with *Croſſes*.

And the greater progreſs a man makes in *ſpirit*, the more heavy croſſes doth he often meet withal; becauſe the grief of his baniſhment grows greater through love.

8. But notwithſtanding, Man that is ſo many ways afflicted is not without ſome eaſe of conſolation; becauſe he knows, Great good doth accrue unto him by bearing his Croſs.

For, whilſt he willingly ſubjects himſelf to it, all the burthen of tribulation is turned into confidence of divine comfort.

And the more the fleſh is waſted by affliction, the more the *ſpirit* is ſtrength-

ſtrengthened by *inward* conſolation.

And ſometimes, he is ſomuch comforted with this love to tribulation and adverſity, that he might be conformable to JESUS CHRIST crucified; that he deſires not to be without ſorrow and trouble.

For, he believes himſelf to be ſo much the more pleaſing to God, as he ſhall be able to ſuffer more for Him.

This is not the virtue of man, but the *grace* of *Chriſt*; that can, and doth perform ſuch great things in frail fleſh; that, what naturally it abhorrs, and flyes, even that, through fervour of ſpirit, it lays hold on, and *loves*.

9. IT is not according to mans inclination to bear and love the *Croſs*; to chaſtize, and ſubdue the body; to fly honours, to endure contume-

lyes

yes willingly, to deſpiſe himſelf, and wiſh to-be-deſpiſed; to ſuffer all adverſities and detriments, and to deſire no proſperity in this world.

If thou doſt look on thy ſelf, thou canſt not do ſuch things of thy ſelf.

But if thou doſt confide in our *Lord*, ſtrength will be given thee from heaven, and the world and the fleſh ſhall be ſubject to thy power.

Nor ſhalt thou fear thine enemy the Devil, if thou beeſt armed with *faith*, and ſigned with the Croſs of Chriſt.

10. RESOLVE, therefore, like a good and faithful ſervant of *Chriſt* to bear manfully the *Croſs* of thy *Lord*, who for thy love was crucified.

Prepare thy ſelf to bear many adverſities, and divers kinds of troubles in this miſerable life; for, ſo it will be with thee whereſoever thou

thou art, and so surely thou wilt find it whereſoever thou doſt hide thy ſelf.

It muſt be ſo with thee of neceſſity, and there is no means to avoid Tribulations and *Croſſes*, but to bear them patiently.

Drink of the Chalice of our *Lord* lovingly, if thou doſt deſire to be his friend, and have part with Him.

Leave the deſire of Comfort to *God*, let him do therein as beſt pleaſeth him. *Matt.* 20.

Set thou thy heart upon ſuffering tribulations, and account them the greateſt comforts. *Joh.* 18.

For, The ſufferings of this life are not condigne to the meriting of future glory, which ſhall be revealed in us, Rom. 8.

Though thou alone couldeſt ſuffer them all.

11. When

11. WHEN thou ſhalt come to this paſs, that tribulation becoms ſweet, and ſavoury to thee for the *love of Chriſt*; then, conceive it to be well with thee, for thou haſt found a paradiſe upon earth.

As long as it is grievous to thee to ſuffer, and that thou ſeekeſt to avoid it; ſo long ſhalt thou be ill at eaſe, and the trouble which thou flyeſt from, will follow thee every where.

12. IF thou doſt ſettle thy ſelf to what thou oughteſt, (to wit) To ſuffer and dy to thy ſelf; it will quickly be better with thee, and thou ſhalt find *peace*.

Though thou ſhouldſt have been rapt to the third heaven with Saint *Paul*, thou art not thereby aſſured that thou ſhalt ſuffer no contradiction. 2 *Cor.* 12.

I (ſaid JESUS) *will ſhew him how*

how great things he must suffer for my Name's sake. Act. 9.

It remains therefore that thou must suffer, if thou desire to *love* JESUS, and perpetually to serve *him.*

13. I would to *God* thou wert worthy to suffer something, for the name of JESUS! How great glory would it be to thee, what joy to the Saints of *God*, and how great edification unto thy neighbour?

Every one commends Patience, & Bearing of the Cross; but Alas! Few desire to suffer it.

With great reason, ought'st thou to suffer a little for CHRIST, since many suffer greater things for the World.

14. KNOW for certain, thou oughtest to lead a dying life

And

And the more every one dies to himſelf, ſo much more doth he begin to live to God.

No man is fit to comprehend heavenly things, who ſubmits not himſelf to ſuffer adverſities for CHRIST.

Nothing is more acceptable to *God*, nothing more wholſome to our ſelves in this world, then willingly to ſuffer adverſities for CHRIST.

And, if it were in thy choice, thou ſhouldſt rather chooſe to ſuffer with CHRIST than to be delighted with many comforts: for, ſo thou wouldſt more reſemble CHRIST, and be more conformable to all the Saints.

For, The merit and perfection of our ſtate of life, conſiſts not in much ſweetneſs, and comfort, but rather in ſuffring great afflictions and troubles.

15. Had

15. Had there truly been any thing better and more available to the ſalvation of man than ſuffering, ſurely *Chriſt* would have ſhewed it by word, and example.

But, He plainly exhorted all the diſciples that followed him, to bear the Croſs, ſaying, *If any one will come after me, let him Deny himſelf, and take up his* Croſs, *and follow me.* Luke. 9.

So that when we have read, and ſearched all; let this be the final concluſion, that *Through many tribulations we muſt enter into the kingdome of God* Acts. 14.

The End of the Second Book.

THE

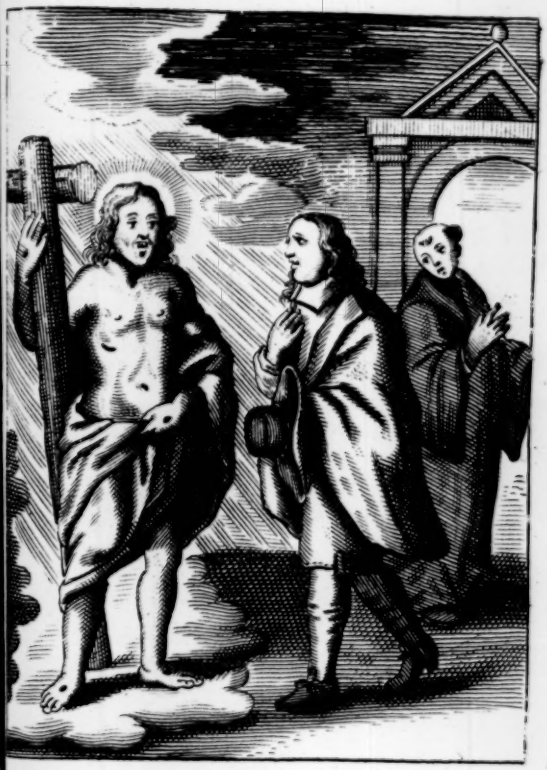
THE THIRD BOOK OF THE IMITATION OF *CHRIST.*

CHAP. I.

Of the Internal Speech of Chriſt to a Faithful Soul.

1. *I WIL hearken to what my Lord God will ſpeak in me,* Pſal. 84.

Bleſſed is that ſoul that hears her Lord



I will lead her into ye Desert & there will I speak to her heart. Os.a 2. 3.

Lord ſpeaking in her, and receives words of comfort from *His* mouth.

Bleſſed are thoſe ears that hear the ſoft wiſpers of *Gods inſpirations*, and liſten not to the murmuring noiſe of the *world*, 1 *King*. 3.

Bleſſed indeed are thoſe ears, which hearken not to the outward voice, but to *truth*, ſpeaking and teaching inwardly, *Matt*. 13.

Bleſſed are the eyes, which being ſhut to all outward things, are open to thoſe *within*.

Bleſſed are they who penetrate *internal* things, and endeavour to prepare themſelves more and more, by daily exerciſes, to the attaining of *heavenly ſecrets*.

Bleſſed are they who attend wholly to *God*, and ſhake from themſelves all worldly hinderances.

Obſerve theſe things, O my ſoul, and ſhut up the doors of thy ſenſes, that thou mayſt hear *what the Lord thy*

thy God ſpeaks in thee. Pſal. 8.

2. THUS ſaith thy beloved, *I am thy ſalvation, thy peace, and thy life.* Pſal. 34.

Keep thy ſelf with me, and thou ſhalt find peace.

Forſake all tranſitory things, and ſeek for eternal.

What are worldly things but deceipts? And what will all creatures avail thee, if thou beeſt forſaken by thy Creator?

Therefore, leaving all earthly things, endeavour to pleaſe thy *Creator*, and be faithful to *him*, that thou mayeſt attain true happineſs.

CHAP.

CHAP. II.

That, Truth ſpeaks inwardly, without noiſe of words.

1. SPEAK, *Lord, for thy ſervant heareth.* 1 King. 3.

I am thy ſervant, give me underſtanding, that I may know thy teſtimonies. Pſal. 118.

Incline my heart to the words of thy mouth, let thy ſpeech diſtil as dew.

The children of *Iſrael* ſaid heretofore to *Moſes, Speak thou to us, and we will hear thee, but let not the Lord ſpeak to us leſt we dy.* *Exod.* 20.

Not ſo, *Lord*, not ſo, I beſeech Thee; but rather, with the Prophet *Samuel*, I humbly and earneſt-

ly intreat thee, *Speak, Lord, for thy ſervant heareth:*

Let not *Moſes*, nor any of the Prophets, ſpeak unto me, but do *thou* rather ſpeak, my *Lord God*, Who art the inſpirer, and enlightner of all the Prophets.

For, *Thou* alone without them canſt perfectly inſtruct me; but they, without *Thee*, profit nothing.

2. THEY indeed pronounce words, but give not the *Spirit*.

They ſpeak exceeding well, but (if *Thou* be ſilent) inflame not the heart.

They deliver the letters, but *Thou* openeſt the ſenſe.

They produce Myſteries, but *Thou* openeſt the ſecret meaning of them.

They declare the commandments, but *Thou* enableſt to fulfil them.

They ſhew the way, but *Thou* giveſt ſtrength to walk. They

They work only outwardly, but *Thou* doſt inſtruct and *inlighten* the heart.

They water the outſide, but *Thou* giveſt fruitfulneſs.

They cry loud with words, but *Thou* giveſt underſtanding to the hearer.

3. Let not *Moſes* therefore ſpeak to me, but *Thou*, my *Lord God*, *eternal truth*; leſt perhaps I dy and become fruitleſs, if I be only outwardly warmed, and not *inwardly inflamed*; and leſt the Word being heard and not fulfilled, known and not loved, believed and not obſerved, ſhould riſe up in judgment againſt me.

Speak therefore, O Lord, for thy ſervant heareth, for thou haſt the words of eternal life. 1 King. 3. Joh. 6. Speak thou to me, to the comfort of my ſoul, & the amendment of my whol

life; and to thy praiſe, and glory, and everlaſting honour.

CHAP. III.

That the words of God are to be heard with humility; and that many weigh them not.

1. SON, hear *my* words for they are ſweet, and exceed all the wiſdome of all the philoſophers, and of all the wiſe men of this world.

My words are ſpirit, and life, and not to be weighed by humane underſtanding, *Joh.6.*

They are not to be drawn to vain pleaſure; but to be heard in ſilence, and to be received with all humility, and great affection.

2. AND I ſaid, *Bleſſed is the man whom thou ſhalt inſtruct, O Lord, and ſhalt*

shalt teach him thy Law, that thou mayst ease him from all evil days, that he be not destroyed upon earth. Psal. 93.

3. *I* (saith our Lord) *have taught the Prophets from the beginning,* Heb. 2. and cease not continually to speak to every one; but many are hardened, and give no Ear to *my* speech.

The greater number listen more willingly to the world than to *God,* and follow sooner the desires of the flesh than the will of *God.*

The world promiseth temporal and small things, and is served with great diligence; I promise most high, and eternal things, and their hearts are drousy and dull.

Who is he that serves, & obeys *me* in all things, with so great care as the world, and the Lords therof, are served?

Bluſh O Sidon (ſaith the Sea); if they ask Why? Hear the reaſon.

For a ſmall living, a long voyage is undertaken; but for eternal life, many will ſcarce moove a foot from the ground. Eſay. 23.

A reward of a ſmall price, is ſought after; ſometimes foul quarrells ariſe for a penny; they fear not to toyl day and night for a ſmall promiſe and a trifle.

4. BUT alas! to purchaſe an unchangeable good, and ineſtimable reward, and the ſupream honour and eternal glory, they are unwilling to take the leaſt pains.

Bluſh therefore thou ſlothful, and murmuring ſervant, that they are more induſtrious for perdition, than thou for life *eternal*. *Eſay*. 25.

They rejoyce more in *vanity* than thou in the *truth*.

They are ſometimes deceived of their

their hopes; but *my* promise never deceives any, nor do I send any away empty that trust in *me*. *Rom.* 1. *Mat.* 24.

What I promised I will perform, what I have said I will make good, if thou remain in my love to the end. Mat. 24. Reu. 2.

I am the rewarder of all good men, I am the powerful preserver of all devout persons. *Matt.* 15.

5. WRITE my words in thy heart, and weigh them diligently, for they will be very necessary in time of temptation.

What thou understandest not when thou readest, thou shalt know in the day of visitation.

I am wont to visit my elect two manner of ways; (to wit) by Temptation, and Consolation.

And, I read them two lessons, every day; in one, *I* reprehend their

Vices; in the other, *I* exhort them to the increaſe of Virtues.

He who hath *my* words, and deſpiſeth them, hath One that will judg him at the laſt day.

A Prayer, to implore the grace of devotion.

6. O my *God*, thou art all my good; and, Who am I, that dare ſpeak unto thee? *Jer.*18.

I am thy moſt poor ſervant, and vile worm; much poorer, and more contemptible than I know, or dare expreſs.

Remember notwithſtanding, O *Lord*, that I am nothing, have nothing, and can do nothing.

Thou alone art good, juſt, & holy; *thou* canſt do all things, perform'ſt all things, filleſt all things, leaving a ſinner only void of all good.

Remember *thy* mercies, *ô Lord*, and fill my heart with *thy grace*, who

who wilt not have *thy* works to be in vain.

How can I ſupport my ſelf in this miſerable life, unleſs thy mercy and *grace* comfort me?

Turn not thy face from me, delay not thy viſitation, withdraw not thy comfort, leſt my ſoul become as earth without water. Pſal.68.Pſal.143.

Lord, teach me to fulfil *thy* will, and teach me to live worthily, and humbly in *thy* ſight.

For, Thou art my wiſdome, and doſt truly know me; and didſt know me before the world was made, and before I was born into the world.

CHAP. IIII.

That we ought to live in truth, and humility, in the ſight of God.

1. SON, walk before *me* in *truth*, and ſeek *me* always in *ſimplicity* of heart.

He that walks before *me* in *truth*, ſhall be defended from evil incurſions, and *truth* ſhall deliver him from ſeducers, and from detractions of the wicked. *Gen.*17. *Wiſd.*1.

If *truth* ſhall free thee, thou ſhalt be *truly* free; and thou wilt not care for the vain ſpeeches of men. *Joh.*8.

O *Lord*, what *thou* ſayſt is *true*, and accordingly let it be done with me.

Let *thy truth* teach me, let it keep me, and bring me to an happy end.

Let it deliver me from all evil affection,

affection, and all inordinate love, and I shall walk with *thee* in great freedom of heart.

2. I will teach thee (saith *Truth*) those things which are right and pleasing in *my* sight.

Think of thy sins with great sorrow and grief, and never esteem thy self to be any thing for thy good works.

Thou art truly a sinner, subject to many passions, and intangled.

Of thy self thou always tendest to nothing, and art soon cast down, soon overcome, soon troubled, soon dissolved. 1 *Cor.* 4.

Thou hast nothing wherein to glory; but many things for which thou oughtst to vilify thy self; for thou art much weaker than thou art able to comprehend.

3. Let therefore nothing seem much

much to thee, whatſoever thou doſt; let nothing ſeem great, nothing precious, nothing to be admired, nothing worthy of eſtimation, nothing glorious, nothing praiſworthy and deſirable, but what is *Eternal*.

Let the *Eternal Truth* pleaſe thee above all things, and thy own great unworthineſs ever diſpleaſe thee.

Fear nothing ſo much; blame, and avoid nothing ſo much as thy ſins & vices, which ought to diſpleaſe thee more than any loſs whatſoever.

Some walk not ſincerely in *my* preſence; but, led by a certain curioſity, and pride, will know *my* ſecrets, and underſtand the high myſteries of *God*, neglecting themſelves, and their own ſalvation. *Eccl.* 3.

Theſe perſons *I* reſiſt, and they fall into ſins, and tentations through their

their pride, and curioſity. 1 *Cor.*3.

4. FEAR the Judgments of *God*; dread the wrath of the Almighty, diſcuſs not the works of the Higheſt; but ſearch thine own iniquities, how many ways thou haſt offended, and how much good thou haſt neglected.

Some carry their devotion only in books, ſome in pictures, ſome in outward ſignes and figures.

Some have *me* in their mouth, but little in their hearts. *Eſay.*29.

There are others whoſe underſtanding being enlightned, and affections purified, do aſpire continually to everlaſting happineſs, are unwilling to hear of earthly things, and grieve to be ſubject to the neceſſities of Nature.

And theſe feel what the *ſpirit of truth* ſpeaks in them, becauſe it teacheth them to deſpiſe earthly things, and

and love heavenly things, to neglect the world, and all day and night to aſpire after heaven.

CHAP. V.

Of the wonderful effect of divine love.

1. I BLESS *thee, ô heavenly Father, Father of my Lord* JESUS CHRIST, who haſt vouchſafed to be mindful of me poor wretch.

O Father of mercies, and God of all conſolation, 2 Cor. 1. I give thee thanks who ſometimes doſt comfort me, unworthy of all comfort.

I evermore bleſs, and glorify *thee*, with *thy* Only-begotten *Son*, and Holy-Ghoſt the Comforter, for ever and ever.

O my *Lord God*, my holy *lover*; when thou

thou ſhalt come into mine heart, then all my *interior* will rejoyce.

Thou art my glory, and the exſultation of my heart; Thou art my hope, and refuge in the day of my tribulation. Pſal. 32. Pſal. 131.

2. BUT, becauſe I am yet weak in *love*, and imperfect in virtue; therefore, have I need to be comforted, and ſtrengthened by *thee*.

Wherefore viſit me often, and inſtruct me with *thy* holy diſcipline.

Free me from all evil paſſions, and heal my heart from inordinate affections.

That, being cured, and well purged within, I may be made fit to love, ſtrong to ſuffer, and conſtant to preſevere.

3. *LOVE* is a great thing, and a ſoveraign good; which of it ſelf makes every burthen light, and equally

qually bears all unequal burthens.

For, it ſupports the burthen without being burthened thereby, and makes even bitter things to be ſweet and ſavoury.

The noble *love* of JESUS ſpurs us on to noble actions, & excites always a deſire of greater perfection.

Love ſtill ayms at high matters, and will not be kept down by baſe things.

Love will be free, and eſtranged from all worldly affection, to the end that the *interior* ſight thereof may not be darkned, & that it may not be intangled by any temporal commodity, nor caſt down by any incommodity.

Nothing is ſweeter than *love*, nothing ſtronger, nothing higher, nothing more ample, nothing more pleaſant, nothing more full, or better, in heaven or in earth.

For, Love proceeds from *God*, & cannot

cannot reſt but in *God* above all created things.

4. WHOSOEVER *loves*, *he* flies, runs, and rejoyceth; he is free, and not to be retained.

He gave *all for all*, *and hath all in all*; ſince he reſts in One ſupream above all, from Whom all good flows, and proceeds.

He regards not the gift, but turns himſelf to the *giver* above all good.

Love often knows no meaſure, but is fervent above all meaſure.

Love feels no burthen, weighs no pains, deſires to do more than it can; complains not of impoſſibility, becauſe it conceives all things to be lawful, and poſſible.

And therefore it is able to do all, and accompliſheth many things, and ſubdues them to the affection; whereas he that *loves* not, faints and falls down.

5. LOVE

5. LOVE is watchful, and ſleeping ſleeps not; being wearied, is not tired; ſtreightned, and not oppreſſed; frighted, and yet not troubled; but, like a lively flame, and fiery ſpark, aſcends forcibly, and paſſeth-thorow, ſecurely. *Rom.*8.

He that *loves*, knows what this voyce crys; a loud cry in the ears of *God* is the burning love of the Soul, which ſaith, *O my God, my love, Thou art wholly mine, and I wholly thine.*

6. INCREASE my *love*, that I may learn, with *the interior* mouth of my heart, to taſte how ſweet it is, to *love God*, and to be diſſolved, and ſwim in *love.*

Let me be ſeized with love, aſcending above my ſelf, through exceſs of fervor, and amazement.

Let

Let me ſing the ſong of *love*, and follow *thee* my *Beloved* aſcending on high; let my ſoul faint in *thy* praiſe, and rejoyce through *love*.

Let me *love thee* more than my Self; and my Self only for *Thee*; and all in *Thee* who do truly love thee; as the law of *love* commands, which ſhines from *Thee*.

7. *LOVE* is ſwift, ſincere, pious, pleaſant, and delightful; ſtrong, patient, faithful, prudent, long-ſuffering, couragious, and no ſelf-ſeeker. 1 *Cor.* 15.

For, Where a man ſeeks himſelf, there he falls from *love*. *Phil.*2.

Love is circumſpect, humble, and upright, not remiſs, nor leight, nor given to vanity; ſober, chaſt, ſtable, quiet, and watchful over all the Senſes.

Love is ſubject, and obedient to Prelates, vile and abject to it ſelf; devout

devout and grateful to *God*; always truſting and hoping in *Him*, even when it hath no taſte of *God*: for, there is no living in *love* without pain. 1 *Cor.* 10.

8. Whoſoever is not ready to ſuffer all things, and to ſubmit himſelf to the will of his *beloved*, is not worthy to be called a *lover*.

A *Lover* ought for his beloved willingly to embrace all that is hard, and bitter; and never to forſake *him*, for any contrary accidents whatſoever.

CHAP. VI.

Of the proof of true Love.

1. SON, *thou art not yet a ſtrong, and prudent Lover.* (*Why Lord!*)

Becauſe thou giveſt over for a ſmall

ſmall adverſity, and ſeekeſt comfort too earneſtly.

A ſtout *lover* is ſtable in temptations, and gives no credit to the crafty perſwaſions of the Enemy.

As *I* pleaſe him in proſperity, ſo *I* do not diſpleaſe him in adverſity.

2. A prudent *lover* conſiders not ſo much the gift of the *lover*, as the *love* of the giver.

He more eſteems the good-will than the valew, and placeth all gifts beneath his *beloved*.

A Noble *lover* reſts not in the gift, but in *Me* above any gift.

All is not therefore loſt, becauſe thou haſt ſometimes leſs taſte of *Me* and my Saints, than thou wouldſt.

That good, and ſweet deſire which thou ſometimes feeleſt, is the effect of *preſent Grace*; and a certain foretaſte of the heavenly country, whereon we muſt not re-

ly

ly roomuch, becauſe it comes, and goes.

But, To fight againſt the evil motions of the mind which may ariſe, and to deſpiſe the ſuggeſtions of the devil, That is a ſign of virtue, and of great merit. *Matt.* 4.

3. LET not, therefore, ſtrange fancies diſturb thee, of what nature ſoever they are; but keep a firm purpoſe, and upright intention to *God*.

Neither is it an illuſion when ſuddenly thou art rapt on high, and preſently returnſt to thy accuſtomed fooliſh cogitations of heart.

For, thou doſt rather unwillingly ſuffer them than cauſe them, and as long as they diſpleaſe thee, and thou ſtriveſt againſt them, it is merit, and not loſs.

4. KNOW, that thy old Enemy ſtrives

ſtrives altogether to hinder thy good deſires, and to divert thee from all devout exerciſes, (to wit) from the worſhipping of the Saints, from the devout remembrance of *my paſſion*, from the profitable remembrance of thy ſins, from the cuſtody of thine own heart, and from a firm purpoſe of profiting in virtue.

He ſuggeſts to thee many evil thoughts, that he may cauſe thee to feel a tediouſneſs, and horrour, and ſo withdraw thee from prayer, and reading of devout books.

Humble Confeſſion doth diſpleaſe him; and if, he could, he would make thee quit the holy Communion.

Truſt him not, nor care for him, though he often ſet ſnares of deceipt to intrap thee.

Charge him with it when he ſuggeſts evil and unclean things, and ſay unto him.

Avoid,

*Avoid, unclean ſpirit Mat.*4. Bluſh miſerable wretch! *Thou* art very filthy who bring'ſt ſuch things to my ears.

Depart from me wicked Deceiver, thou ſhalt have no part in me; but JESUS ſhall be with me as a ſtrong warriour, and thou ſhalt ſtand confounded.

I had rather dy, and undergo any torment, than conſent unto thee.

Hold thy peace, and be ſilent; though thou trouble me never ſo much, I will hear thee no more.

The Lord is my light and ſalvation; whom then ſhall I fear? Pſal. 106.

If whole armies were againſt me, my heart ſhall not be afraid; the Lord is my helper, and Redeemer.

5. FIGHT like a good ſouldier; and, if thou ſometimes fall through frailty, take greater courage than before;

before; hoping to receive more abundant *grace*; and take heed of Vain complacence, and Pride.

Many are led thereby into errour, and fall oftentimes into almost incurable blindness.

Let the fall of proud persons foolishly presuming of themselves, serve thee for a warning, and keep thee continually in humility.

CHAP. VII.

That, Grace is to be hid under the veil of Humility.

1. SON, It is more profitable, and secure for thee, to hide the grace of devotion, and not to extol thy self, nor speak much thereof, nor value it much, but rather despise thy self, and be afraid of it, as given to one unworthy.

This affection is not to be cleaved unto, which may be quickly changed into the contrary.

When thou art in *grace*, think how miſerable, and needy, thou art wont to be without it.

Nor doth the profit of a ſpiritual life conſiſt ſo much in receiving the *grace* of comfort, as in bearing the want thereof with humility, patience, & reſignation; ſo as it makes thee not more ſlothful in the exerciſe of *prayer*, nor cauſe thee to neglect the reſt of thy accuſtomed good works: but that thou willingly perform what lyes in thee, according to thy ability and underſtanding, not wholly neglecting thy ſelf, through the dryneſs and auxiety of mind which thou feeleſt.

2. For, there be many who, when it ſucceeds not well with them, grow forthwith impatient, and ſlothful.

The

The way of man is not always in his own power, but it belongs to *God* to give, and to comfort whom *He* will, when *He* will, and how much *he* will, as it ſhall pleaſe *him*, and no more. *Jer.*10. *Rom.*9.

Some unadviſedly have ruined themſelves through the grace of devotion, becauſe they would do more than they well could; not weighing the meaſure of their weakneſs, but following the deſire of their heart, rather than the judgment of their reaſon.

And becauſe they preſumed of greater matters, than were pleaſing to *God*, they therefore loſt *his grace*.

They who built themſelvs neſts in heaven, were made needy, and left in a dejected ſtate; to the end that being humbled, and impoveriſhed, they may learn not to fly with their own wings, but to hope under *Mine*.

Thoſe who are yet new and unacquainted in the way of our *Lord*, unleſs they govern themſelves by the counſel of diſcreet perſons, may eaſily be deceived, and overthrown.

3. AND if they will rather follow their own judgment than believe the experienced; their end will be dangerous, if they cannot be drawn from their own conceits.

Thoſe who are wiſe in their own conceits, ſeldom ſuffer themſelves to be governed humbly by others.

A little knowledg and a weak underſtanding with humility, is better than great treaſures of Learning, with vain Complacence.

It is better for thee to have little than much, of that whereof thou mayſt be proud.

He doth not diſcreetly, who gives himſelf wholy to mirth, forgetting his former want, and the chaſte fear of

of *God*, which fears to lose the *grace* which is offered.

Neither is he also virtuously wise enough, who in time of adversity, or any tribulation whatsoever, gives way to thoughts of despair; and thinks, and conceives less confidently of *Me* than he ought.

4. HE who is too secure in the time of *peace*, will often be found too much dejected, and fearful in time of war. 1 *Thes.* 3.

If thou wouldst always continue humble, and lowly within thy self; and temper and govern thy soul well; thou wouldst not fall so easily into danger, and offend.

It is good counsel that thou shouldst think when thou art in fervour of *spirit*, what will become of thee when that light shall leave thee. *Job.* 17.

And, if that happen, to remem-

ber that light may return, which for thy inſtruction, and *my glory* I have for a time withdrawn.

5. SUCH a tryal is oftentimes more profitable than if thou ſhouldſt always enjoy proſperity according to thy deſire.

For, a man's deſerts are not to be judged by the many Viſions, and comforts which he receives, nor by his knowledg in Scriptures, nor by his being placed in high degree, but by his being grounded in *true humility*, and repleniſhed with *divine charity*, and that he always ſeeks *purely* and intirely the honour of *God*, and eſteem nothing of himſelf, but with a ſincere heart deſpiſeth himſelf, and rejoyceth more to be deſpiſed, and humbled by others, than to be honoured. *Pſal.* 83.

CHAP.

CHAP. VIII.

Of a mean eſteem of ones ſelf, in the ſight of God.

1. *I WILL ſpeak to my Lord though I am but duſt & aſhes. Gen.* 18.

If I eſteem better of my ſelf behold *thou* doſt ſtand againſt me, and my ſins bear true witneſs againſt me, nor can I contradict them.

But if I abaſe my ſelf, and reduce my ſelf to nothing, and caſt away all ſelf-conceipt, and count my ſelf as I am, but duſt; *thy grace* will be favourable to me, and *thy light* neer my heart, and all eſteem how little ſoever, will be ſwallowed up in the depth of my Nothing, and periſh for ever.

Then wilt thou ſhew me my ſelf, what I am, what I have

been, and from what I came.

For, I am nothing, and know it not.

If I be left to my ſelf, behold I become nothing, and a maſs of infirmity:

But if thou ſuddenly look upon me, I am preſently ſtrengthened, and repleniſhed with new joy.

And it is verp wonderful, that I (who of my own weight ſink continually to the ground) am ſo ſuddenly raiſed, and ſo graciouſly embraced by *thee.*

2. It is *thy love* that doth this, preventing, and releiving me freely in ſo many neceſſities, preſerving me alſo from grievous perils, and delivering me (as I may truly ſay) from innumerable evils.

For, by loving of my ſelf ill, I loſt my ſelf, and by ſeeking *thee* alone, and *purely loving thee*, I found

found both my ſelf and *thee*, and through *thy love*, have brought my ſelf more profoundly to nothing.

For thou, O moſt ſweet JESUS, doſt deal with me above all deſert, and above all that I dare hope or aſk for.

3. BLESSED be *thou*, my *God*; for though I am unworthy of all good, yet thine infinite goodneſs ceaſeth not to do good, even to the ungrateful, and ſuch as are averted from *thee*.

Convert us to *thee*, that we may be grateful, humble, and devout; for, thou art our ſafety, our power, and our ſtrength.

CHAP. IX.

That all things are to be referred to God as to the last End.

1. SON, I ought to be thy supream and last end, if thou desire to be *truly* blessed.

By this intention, thy affection which is oftentimes inordinately inclined to it self,& unto creatures, shall be purified.

For if thou seek thy self in any thing, thou dost presently wither, and dry.

Refer therefore all things chiefly to *me*; for it is *I*, who have given thee all.

Consider every thing as flowing from thy soveraign good,and therefore all things are to be reduced to *me* as to their first Beginning.

2. OUT

2. OUT of *me*, as out of a living fountain, the little and great, the rich and poor, *do draw the water of life.* Joh. 4.

And whosoever shall willingly, and freely serve *me*, he shall receive *grace* for *grace.*

But he that will glory out of *me*, or take delight in any particular good, shall not be grounded in any true joy, nor injoy freedome of heart, but shall be hindred, and straightned many ways. 1 *Cor.* 1.

Therefore, thou must not ascribe any good to thy self, nor attribute virtue to any man, but give all to *God* without whom no man hath any thing.

I have given *all*, and *I* will have *all* returned to *me* again. (1 *Cor.* 4.) and with great severity require a grateful acknowledgment.

3. THIS

3. THIS is truth, by which vain glory is put to flight.

And where *heavenly grace*, and *true charity* enter, there ſhall abide no envy, nor grudging of heart, nor no place be left for ſelf-love.

For, *divine charity* overcomes all, and dilates all the forces of the ſoul.

If thou beeſt truly wiſe thou wilt rejoyce, and hope in none but *me. Matt.*19.

For, *None is good but only God*, Luke.18. *Who is to be praiſed above all, and in all to be bleſſed, for ever and ever. Amen.*

CHAP.

CHAP. X.

That, despising the world, it is sweet to serve God.

1. NOW I will speak again, ô my *Lord*, and will not be silent.

I will say, in the hearing of my *Lord God*, and King that is on high;

O, How great is the multitude of thy sweetness O Lord, which thou hast laid up for those that fear thee, Psal. 13. But what art *thou* to those that *love thee*? what to those that serve *thee* with all their heart?

Unspeakable indeed is the sweetness of *thy* contemplation, which thou bestow'st on those that love *thee*.

In this, most of all, hast *thou* shewed me the sweetness of *thy love*, that,

that, when I had no Beeing, *thou* didſt make me; and when I ſtrayed far from *thee*, *thou* didſt bring me back again, that I might ſerve *thee*, and haſt commanded me to *love thee*. *Gen.* 1. *Pſal.* 118.

2. O Fountain of everlaſting love, what ſhall I ſay of thee?

How can I forget *thee*, *who* haſt vouchſafed to remember me, even when I withered away and periſhed.

Thou haſt uſed mercy to thy ſervant above all hope; and, beyond all deſert, haſt vouchſafed me *thy* favour and friendſhip.

What ſhall I return to *thee* for this *grace?* for it is not granted to all, To forſake all, to renounce the world, and lead a *Monaſtical life.*

Is it much that I ſerve thee, whom all creatures are bound to ſerve? Judith 16.

It ought not to ſeem much to me to

to serve *thee*; but rather this seems wonderful to me that thou hast vouchsafed to admit into *thy* service so poor and unworthy a wretch; and to associate him to *thy* beloved servants.

3. BEHOLD, all is *thine* that I have, and do serve *thee* withall; and yet in truth *thou* rather servest me, than I *thee*.

Behold! Heaven and Earth, which thou hast created for the service of man, are ready at *thy* beck, and do daily perform what *thou* hast commanded.

And this is but little; for *thou* hast moreover created and appointed the Angels for the service of man. *Heb.* 1. 1 *Cor.* 4.

But, which is far above all, *Thou thy self* hast vouchsafed to serve man, and promised to give *thy self* to him. *Psal.* 50.

4. WHAT

4. WHAT ſhall I give *thee* for all theſe thouſands of benefits?

O that I could ſerve *thee*, all the days of my life!

O that I were able at leaſt one day to ſerve *thee* worthily.

Thou art indeed worthy of all ſervice, of all honour, and of everlaſting praiſe.

Thou art truly my *Lord*, and I *thy* poor ſervant; who am bound to ſerve *thee* with all my forces, and never grow weary of praiſing *thee*.

This is my wiſh, this is my deſire, and whatſoever is wanting in me, vouchſafe to ſupply it, I beſeech *thee*.

5. IT is a great honour, and a great glory to ſerve *thee*, and to deſpiſe all things for *thee*.

For they ſhall receive great *grace*, who willingly ſubject themſelves to *thy* holy ſervice. They

They ſhall find the moſt ſweet comfort of the *Holy Ghoſt*, who renounce all carnal delights for *thy love.*

They ſhall obtain great freedom of mind, who for *thy name* enter into the narrow way, and neglect all care of the world.

6. O ſweet and delightful ſervice of *God*, by which man is made *truly free, and holy!*

O ſacred ſtate of religious bondage, which makes man equal to Angels, pleaſing to *God*, terrible to the Devil, and commendable to all faithful people! *Matt.* 11. *Joh.* 13.

O ſervice always to be embraced, and always to be wiſhed for, by which the greateſt good is obtained, and that joy acquired which ſhall never end.

CHAP.

CHAP. XI.

That the desires of our heart are to be examined, and moderated.

1. SON, thou must learn many things which thou hast not yet well learned. What are those, *Lord?* *Psal.* 107.

That thou frame thy desire wholy according to *My* pleasure, and be no *lover* of thy self, but a diligent *lover* and *follower of My Will. Mat.* 6.

Thy desires do oftentimes stir thee up, and violently drive thee, but consider, whether thou art moved rather for *my honour*, than thy own profit.

If I be the cause, thou wilt be well content with whatsoever *I* shall ordain.

But if there lurk any self-inclination in thee, behold this is it that hinders and weighs thee down!

2. BEWARE

2. BEWARE therefore, thou rely not too much on any desire that comes to thy mind, before thou hast consulted with *me*, lest perhaps it repent thee afterwards; and that dislike thee which before pleased thee, and which thou didst earnestly desire as the best.

For, every affection which seems good, is not presently to be followed, nor every contrary affection to be rejected.

It is expedient sometimes to use a restraint even in good desires, and endeavours, lest through importunity thou shouldst incurr distraction of mind, or by ill example become a scandal to others, or else being opposed by others, suddenly become troubled, and fall.

3. SOMTIMES notwithstanding we must use violence, and manfully

ly reſiſt the ſenſual appetite, and not regard what the fleſh would, or would not; but rather labour that even by force it become ſubject to the *Spirit*.

And it is ſo long to be chaſtized, and kept under ſervitude, until it readily obey in all things, and learn to be content with little, and to be pleaſed with ordinary things, and not to murmur at any inconvenience. *Matt.*11. *Rom.*8. 2 *Cor.*4. 2 *Cor.*10. 1 *Cor.*9.

CHAP. XII.

Of the effect of Patience, and ſtrife againſt Concupiſcence.

1. O *LORD GOD*, Patience, as I perceive, is very neceſſary for me; *ſince many adverſities do happen in this life.* Heb.10.

For,

For, howſoever I diſpoſe of my *peace*, my life cannot be without war, and affliction. *Job.7.*

So it is, ſon.

And my Will, is not that thou ſeek that *peace* which is void of temptations, or that feels no contrarieties:

But, then conceive thou haſt found *peace*, when thou ſhalt be exerciſed with ſundry tribulations, and tryed with many adverſities. *James. 1.*

2. IF thou ſaiſt, Thou art not able to ſuffer much, how wilt thou then endure the fire of Purgatory? Of two evils, the leaſt is always to be choſen.

That thou mayſt therefore avoid everlaſting puniſhment in the world to come, endeavour to ſuffer patiently for *God* the evils of this.

Doſt thou think that men of this world,

world, ſuffer little or nothing?

Thou ſhalt not find it ſo, though thou ſeek out thoſe that live in greateſt delicacies.

But they have (ſayſt thou) many delights, and follow their own wills, and therefore make ſmall account of their tribulations.

Be it ſo that they have whatſoever they will: but, How long, doſt thou think, it will laſt?

3. BEHOLD, All thoſe who abound in this world, ſhall vaniſh away like ſmoke, and there ſhall be no memory of their paſt joys.

Yea, even alſo whilſt they live, they reſt not in them without grief, irkſomneſs, and fear:

For, the very ſame thing in which they delight, doth oftentimes cauſe them ſorrow and affliction.

It is but juſtice that they who inordinately ſeek, and follow pleaſures,

ſures, ſhould not obtain them without bitterneſs, and confuſion.

4. O, How-ſhort, how-deceiptful, how inordinate, and filthy art thoſe pleaſures!

Yet, through drunkenneſs, and blindneſs, men underſtand it not; but, like dumb beaſts, for a little pleaſure of a corruptible life, they incur the eternal death of their ſouls. *Eccl.* 18.

Do not therefore, my ſon, run after thy concupiſcences, but forſake thine own will.

Delight in our Lord, and He will grant thee the petitions of thy heart. Pſal. 36.

5. For, If thou wilt indeed be *truly* delighted, and more abundantly comforted by *me*; behold, in the contempt of all worldly things, and in cutting off all baſe delights,

delights, ſhall be thy bleſſing, and aboundant comfort ſhall be given thee.

And ſo much the more as thou withdraw'ſt thy ſelf from all ſolace of creatures, ſo much the ſweeter and more powerful conſolations ſhalt thou find in *me*.

But thou ſhalt not at firſt attain unto them, without a certain grief, and labour of ſtrife.

The old cuſtom will make reſiſtance, but by a better cuſtom it ſhall be overcom'n.

The fleſh will murmur, but by the fervour of the *ſpirit* it ſhall be quelled.

The old Serpent will ſting and trouble thee; but, by prayer, he ſhall be put to flight, and through profitable labour his ſtrong aſſault ſhall be repulſed.

CHAP.

CHAP. XIII.

Of the obedience of an humble subject, according to the example of JESUS CHRIST.

1. SON, whoso endeavours to withdraw himself from obedience, withdraws himself from *grace. Matt.* 16:

And he that desires private things, shall lose the common.

If any one doth not freely, and willingly, submit himself to his superiour, it is a sign that his flesh is not perfectly obedient to him, but oftentimes rebels, and murmurs.

Learn therefore readily to submit thy self to thy superiour, if thou desirest to subdue thine own flesh.

For, The exterior enemy is sooner overcome, if the interior be not out of order.

There is not a worſe, nor a more troubleſome enemy to the ſoul, than Thou to thy Self, not agreeing well with the *ſpirit*.

For, of neceſſity, thou muſt have a true contempt of thy ſelf, if thou wilt prevail againſt fleſh and blood.

2. BECAUSE thou yet loveſt thy ſelf too inordinately, thou art afraid to reſign thy ſelf over to the will of others. *Luke* 20.

But, What great matter is it, if thou, who art duſt and nothing, ſubmit'ſt thy ſelf to man for *God*; when *I the Almighty, and higheſt Soveraign*, who created all things of nothing, have humbly ſubmitted my ſelf to man, for thee? *Joh.* 1. 2.

I became the moſt humble and abject of all men, that thou mightſt overcome thy pride by my humiliation.

Learn to obey (thou, who art duſt);

duſt); learn to humble thy ſelf, (thou who art earth and clay); and put thy ſelf under the feet of all men.

Learn to break thy own will, and to yield thy ſelf to all ſubjection.

3. TAKE conrage againſt thy ſelf, and ſuffer not pride to live in thee, but humble and ſubmit thy ſelf in ſuch manner that every one may trample on thee, and tread thee under their feet, as dirt of the ſtreets.

O vain man! What canſt thou complain of? what canſt thou anſwer (foul ſinner) to them that reproove thee, who haſt ſo many times offended *God*, and deſerved hell?

But, *Mine* eye hath ſpared thee, becauſe thy ſoul was precious in *my* ſight; that thou mighteſt know *my love*, and always remain grateful for *my* benefits, and that thou

mighteſt give thy ſelf continually to *true ſubjection* and *humility*, and mighteſt bear patiently all contempt.

CHAP. XIV.

Of the ſecret Judgments of God to be conſidered, leſt we be extolled in our good deeds.

1. *THOU thundereſt thy judgments over me, ô Lord, and ſhakeſt all my bones with fear and trembling; and my ſoul is ſore afraid.* Job. 15.

I ſtand amazed, and conſider, becauſe the heavens are not pure in thy ſight. Job. 4.

If *thou* haſt found wickedneſs in the Angels, and haſt not pardoned them, What ſhall become of me?

Stars fell from heaven, Apoc. 18.

And

And do I preſume who am but duſt?

They whoſe works ſeemed laudable fell into the loweſt hell, and thoſe who have eaten the bread of Angels, (Pſal. 77.) I have ſeen delighted with the husks of ſwine.

2. THERE is, therefore, no ſanctity, if *thou, ô Lord,* withdraw thy hand.

No wiſdom avails, if *Thou* ceaſe to govern.

No ſtrength helpeth, if *thou* leave to conſerve.

No charity is ſecure, if *thou* doſt not protect it.

No cuſtody of our own is profitable, if *thy holy watchfulneſs* be not preſent.

For, if *thou* leave us, we ſink, and periſh.

But if *thou* doſt viſit us, we live, and are raiſed up.

We are unconſtant, but by *Thee*

we are confirmed.

We grow cold, but by *Thee* we we are inflamed.

3. O, How humbly, and basely, ought I to think of my self?

If I seem to have any good, how little ought I to esteem it?

O Lord, how profoundly ought I to submit my self under the abyss of thy judgments; where I find my self to be *nothing else but nothing, and nothing.*

O immense weight! O sea, that can never be passed over, where I find my self nothing! and wholy nothing.

Where then is the lurking-hole of glory? where confidence, conceived of merit?

All vain-glory is swallowed up in the depth of *Thy* judgments, which hang over me.

4. WHAT

4. WHAT *is all flesh in thy sight? shall clay glory in him that frames it?* Ecclus. 23.

How can he be puffed up with vain words, whose heart is truly subject to *God? Esay* 29.

All the world cannot puff him up, whom *Truth* hath subjected to its-self.

Neither shall he who hath settled his whole hope in *God*, be moved with the tongues of those that praise him.

For, behold, even all they that speak, are nothing; for, they shall pass away with the sound of their words:

But, The Truth of the Lord remaineth for ever, Psal. 116.

CHAP. XV.

What we ought to do and ſay, in every thing we deſire.

1. SON, ſay this in every thing: *O Lord*, if it be pleaſing to *Thee*, let it be done in this ſort.

Lord, *If it be to thine honour*, *let it be done in thy Name*, James 3.

Lord, If *thou* ſeeſt, and approveſt it to be expedient and profitable for me, then grant that I may uſe it to *thine honour*:

But, If *thou* knoweſt, it will be hurtful for me, and not conducing to the health of my ſoul, take from me ſuch a deſire.

For, every Deſire is not from the *Holy Ghoſt*, though it ſeem to man right and good.

It is hard to judg *truly*, whether a good *ſpirit*, or the contrary, drives thee

thee to deſire this, or that; or whether thou art moved to it by thine own *ſpirit.*

Many are deceived in the end, who at firſt ſeemed to be led by a good ſpirit.

2. WHAT-ſoever, therefore, thou wouldſt deſire, or beg; let it always be deſired with the fear of *God*, and humility of heart, and above all, with reſignation of thy ſelf, thou art to commit all to *Me*, and ſay:

O *Lord*, thou knoweſt what is beſt: Do this or that, as *thou* pleaſeſt.

Give what *thou* wilt, how much *thou* wilt, and when *thou* wilt.

Do with me as *thou* knoweſt, and as beſt pleaſeth *thee*, and is moſt for *thine honour.*

Put me where *thou* wilt, and freely diſpoſe of me in all things.

I am in thine hand, turn and wind me about as thou pleaſeſt.

Behold, I am *thy* ſervant ready to all things; for, I deſire not to live to my-ſelf, but to *Thee*.

I pray God, it may be perfectly, and worthily.

A Prayer for the fulfilling of the Will of God.

3. GRANT *me thy Grace, moſt merciful* JESUS, *that IT may be with me, and labour with me, and perſevere with me to the end*, Wiſd. 9.

Grant me always to will and deſire that which is moſt acceptable to *Thee*, and what beſt pleaſeth *Thee*.

Let *Thy* will be mine, and let mine ever follow *Thine*, and agree perfectly with it.

Let my *will* and *nill* be all one with *Thine*, and let me not be able to will, or refuſe any thing, but what

what thou willeſt, and rejecteſt.

Grant that I may die to all that is in the world; and love, for *thy* ſake, to be contemned, and not to be known in this world.

Grant that above all things that can be deſired, I may reſt in *thee*, and bring my heart to enjoy *peace* in *thee*.

Thou art the *true* peace of the heart, *Thou* art the only reſt: out of *thee* all things are troubleſome, and unquiet.

In peace, (in the ſelf-ſame that is in Thee, the one Soveraign and eternal good) *I will ſleep and reſt.* Pſal. 4.

CHAP.

CHAP. XVI.

That true comfort is to be ſought in God *alone.*

1. WHAT-ſoever I can deſire, or imagine for my comfort, I expect not in this life, but hereafter.

For, If I alone ſhould have all the comforts of the world, and might enjoy all the riches of it; it is certain, they cannot laſt long. *Mat.* 16.

Wherefore thou canſt not, ô my ſoul, be fully comforted, nor perfectly delighted, but in *God*, the comforter of the poor, and the receiver of the humble.

Expect a little while, ô my ſoul; expect the divine promiſe; and thou ſhalt have aboundance of all good things in heaven.

If thou doſt too-inordinately deſire

ſire theſe preſent things, thou ſhalt loſe thoſe that are heavenly and eternal.

Uſe temporal, and *deſire* eternal things.

Thou canſt not be ſatiated with any temporal good, becauſe thou art not created to enjoy them.

2. ALTHOUGH thou ſhouldſt enjoy all that is created, yet cannot that make thee happy, or bleſſed.

But in *God*, who created all things doth thy bleſſedneſs and happineſs conſiſt; not, ſuch as is ſeen, and praiſed by the fooliſh lovers of this world, but ſuch as the good faithful ſervants of CHRIST expect, and of which the *ſpiritual*, and pure of heart, whoſe converſation is in heaven, have ſometimes a fore-taſte.

Vain, and ſhort, is all humane ſolace; bleſſed and *true*, is that which is received *inwardly* through *truth*.

A devout man carrieth every where about with him his Comforter JESUS, and ſaith unto him; Be preſent unto me, *Lord* JESUS, at all times, and in all places.

Let this be my conſolation, To be alwayes willing to want all humane comfort.

And, if thy comfort be wanting, let *thy* will, and good liking of it, be to me as the greateſt comfort.

For, Thou wilt not be angry always, neither wilt thou threaten for ever, Pſal. 102.

CHAP. XVII.

That we ought to caſt all our Care upon God.

1. SON, Suffer me to do what I will; I know what is fitteſt for thee.

Thou

Thou judgeſt in many things as humane affection perſwades thee.

It is true, Lord, as thou ſayeſt, *Thy* care over me is greater, than all the care I can take of my ſelf.

For, he ſtands at too great a hazard, who caſts not his whole care on *Thee*.

Lord, as long as my will remains right, and firm in *Thee*, do with me whatſoever it ſhall pleaſe *thee*, for, it cannot but be good, whatſoever *thou* doſt with me.

2. If *thou* wilt have me to be in darkneſs, be *thou* bleſſed:

If *thou* wilt have me to be light, be *thou* again bleſſed.

If *thou* doſt vouchſafe to comfort me, be *thou* bleſſed; and, if *thou* wilt have me afflicted, be *thou* equally ever bleſſed.

Son, in this ſtate muſt thou ſtand, if thou deſireſt to walk with me.

Thou

Thou muſt be as ready to ſuffer, as to rejoyce; thou muſt be as willing to be poor and needy, as plentiful and rich.

3. LORD, I will ſuffer willingly for *thee*, whatſoever thy pleaſure is ſhould befal me.

I will receive indifferently from Thy hand good and evil, ſweet and bitter, joyful and ſorrowful, *and will give thee thanks for all that happens to me*: keep me from all ſin, and I will fear neither death nor hell. *Pſal.* 22.

As-long as *thou* doſt not caſt me from *thee* for ever, nor blot me out of the book of life, what tribulation ſoever ſhall befall me, ſhall not hurt me.

CHAP.

Chap. XVIII.

That temporal miseries are to be born patiently, according to the example of JESUS CHRIST.

1. SON, *I* descended from heaven for thy salvation. *John.* 3. I took upon *me* thy miseries, not of necessity but drawn to it by charity, that thou mightst learn to bear temporal miseries patiently, and willingly. *Esay.* 53. *Luke.* 2.

For, from the hour of *my* birth untill *my* death on the Cross, *I* was not without suffering.

I suffered great want of temporal things.

I heard frequently many complaints against *me.*

I meekly sustained contempts, & confusions.

For benefits, I received ingratitude;

tude; for miracles, blaſphemies; for doctrine, reprehenſions.

2. LORD, ſince *thou* wert patient in *thy* life-time, in this chiefly fulfilling the commandment of *thy Father*; it is juſt, that I, a moſt miſerable ſinner, ſhould, according to *thy will*, patiently behave my ſelf; and, for my own ſalvation, bear the burthen of this corruptible life, as long as thou pleaſeſt. *Joh.* 5.

For, Though this preſent-life be burthenſome; yet notwithſtanding now by *thy grace*, it is made very meritorious; and, by thy example, and footſteps of thy Saints, more plain, and tolerable to the weak:

Yea, much more comfortable alſo, than it was in times paſt in the old Law; when the gate of heaven was ſhut, and the way thither ſeemed alſo darker; when ſo few took

took care to ſeek after the kingdom of heaven.

Neither could they who were then juſt, and to be ſaved, enter into *thy* heavenly Kingdom, before *thy Paſſion*, and the debt of thy ſacred Death was diſcharged.

3. O, How great thanks am I bound to give *thee*, Who haſt vouchſafed to ſhew unto me, and all faithful ſouls, a right and good way to *thy* everlaſting Kingdom! For, *thy life* is our Way, and by holy patience we walk to *thee*, who art our Crown.

If *thou* hadſt not gon before, and taught us, Who would have taken care to follow?

Alas, How many would ſtay behind, and remain far off, if they ſaw not thy excellent Example?

Behold, we are yet cold; though we have heard of ſo many of thy wonders

wonders and documents: What would become of us, if we had not so great light to follow thee?

Chap. XIX.

Of Suffering injuries patiently: Who is prooved to be truly Patient.

1. What is that thou say'st, son? Cease to complain, considering my Passion, and that of other Saints.

Thou hast not yet resisted to the shedding of blood. *Heb.* 12.

It is but little thou sufferest in comparison of them who have suffered so much, been so strangely tempted, so grievously afflicted, so many ways tryed and exercised. *Heb.* 11.

Thou ought'st therefore to call to mind the heavy sufferings of others,

thers, that thou mayst the more easily bear thy little ones.

And if they seem not little to thee, take heed thy impatience be not the cause thereof.

But, whether they be great or small, endeavour to bear them all patiently.

2. THE better thou disposest thy self to suffer, so much more wisely thou dost, and so much more dost thou merit.

And thou wilt bear it more easily, if thy mind be diligently prepared, and thou accustomed thereunto.

Say not, I cannot take these things from such a man; and, these kind of things are not to be suffered by me; for, he hath done me great wrong, and upbraided me with things I never thought on: but, from another, I will willingly suffer,

fer, as I ſhall ſee cauſe of ſuffering.

Such a thought is fooliſh, which conſiders not the virtue of patience, nor by whom it ſhall be crowned, but rather weighs the perſons, and injuries offered.

3. He is not truly patient, who will ſuffer no more than he thinks good, and from whom he pleaſeth.

He that is firmly patient, minds not by whom he is exerciſed whether by his Prelate, or by ſome of his Equals, or by his Inferiours; whether by a good, and holy man, or by a perverſe and unworthy perſon.

But he takes all indifferently, and thankfully, as from the hand of *God*, how much ſoever, or how often ſoever any adverſity happens unto him, and eſteems it a great gain.

Becauſe nothing how little ſoever,

ver, ſo it be ſuffered for *God*, can be without merit in his ſight.

4. BE thou therefore always prepared for the fight, if thou wilt have the victory.

Without a combat thou canſt not attain the Crown of patience.

If thou wilt not ſuffer, thou refuſeſt to be crowned.

But, if thou deſireſt to be crowned, fight manfully, and endure patiently.

Without labour, there is no coming to reſt; nor can the victory be obtained, without fighting.

Lord, make that poſſible to me by *grace*, which ſeems impoſſible to me by nature.

Thou knoweſt, I can ſuffer but little, and that I am quickly dejected with a ſmal adverſity;

Let all exerciſe of tribulation, and adverſity be made amiable, and deſirable

ſirable to me for thy name's ſake.

For, To ſuffer, and to be vexed for Thee, is very healthful to my ſoul.

CHAP. XX.

Of the Confeſſion of our infirmities, and the miſeries of this life.

1. *I Will confeſs againſt my ſelf mine injuſtice, I will confeſs to thee, O Lord, mine infirmity*, Pſal. 31.

It is oftentimes a ſmall matter that dejects and grieves me.

I purpoſe to do couragiouſly; but, when a ſmall temptation comes, it brings me to great ſtreights.

It is ſometimes a very trifle, from which great temptation doth proceed.

And when I think my ſelf ſomewhat

what ſafe, and do leaſt expect it; I find my ſelf overcome, ſometimes, with a ſmall blaſt.

2. BEHOLD, therefore, ô Lord, my unworthineſs and frailty, every way known to *thee*.

Have mercy on me, and deliver me out of the mire, that I ſtick not faſt therein. *Pſal.* 24.

Let me not remain dejected for ever. *Pſal.* 68.

This is that which often beats me back, and confounds me in *thy* ſight, becauſe I am ſo ſubject to fall, and weak in reſiſting my paſſions.

And, though I do not altogether conſent, yet their aſſaults are troubleſome, and grievous to me; and it is very tedious, To live thus in daily ſtrife.

My infirmity is hereby made known unto me, ſince evil fancies do always much more eaſily ruſh

in upon me, than they can be cast out again.

3. *O most mighty God of Israel*, zealous lover of faithful souls, behold the labour and sorrow of thy servant, and assist me in all whatsoever I undertake.

Strengthen me with heavenly power, lest the old man, miserable flesh, not yet subject to the spirit, prevail and get the upper hand; against which we must fight, as long as we breathe in this miserable life.

Alas! What kind of life is this, where tribulations and miseries are never wanting? where all things are full of snares and enemies?

For, One tribulation or temptation passeth, and another cometh; yea, during the first conflict many others come one upon another, and unexpected.

4. AND,

4. And, how can a life be loved that hath ſo many afflictions, and is ſubject to ſo many calamities, and miſeries?

How is it called a life, that begets ſo many deaths and plagues?

And yet it is loved, and many ſeek to delight themſelves in it.

The World is often blamed that it is deceitful and vain; and yet it is not eaſily forſaken, becauſe the deſires of the fleſh bear rule.

Some things draw us to love it, and others to contemn it.

The luſts of the fleſh, the luſts of the eyes, and the pride of life, draw us to the love of the world, 1 *Joh.* 2.

But the pains and miſeries that attend it, breed a loathing of it.

5. But (alas)! wicked pleaſure overcomes a Mind given to the world, and ſuch an one eſteems the

pleaſing of her ſenſes a delight, becauſe ſhe hath neither ſeen nor taſted the ſweetneſs of *God*, nor the *inward* delight of virtue.

But they who perfectly contemn the world, and endeavour to live to *God* under holy diſcipline, are not ignorant of the divine ſweetneſs that is promiſed to the true forſakers of the world, and diſcern clearly how grievouſly the world errs, and how many ways it is deceived.

CHAP. XXI.

That we are to reſt in God above all goods and gifts.

1. O MY ſoul? Above all things, and in all things, do thou ever reſt in *God*; for, He is the *eternal Reſt* of the Saints.

Grant me, O moſt ſweet and loving

ving JESUS, to rest in *thee* above all creatures.

Above all health and beauty; above all glory and honour; above all power and dignity; above all knowledge and subtilty; above all riches and arts; above all joy and gladness; above all fame and praise; above all sweetness and comfort; above all hope and promise; above all merit and desire; above all gifts and rewards, that thou canst give and impart; above all joy and jubilation that a humane mind can conceive and feel: lastly, above Angels and Arch-Angels; and above all the heavenly host; above all things visible and invisible; and above all that Thou art not (my God.)

2. FOR thou, O my *Lord God*, art good above all goods; *Thou* alone, most powerful; *Thou* alone,

moſt full and ſufficient; *Thou* alone, moſt ſweet and comfortable; *Thou* alone, moſt beautiful and loving; *Thou* alone, moſt noble and glorious above all things: in whom all good things together are, have been, and ever ſhall be, moſt perfectly.

And therefore, whatſoever *Thou* beſtoweſt on me beſides *Thy ſelf*, or revealeſt of *Thy ſelf*, or promiſeſt whileſt *thou* art not ſeen, nor fully obtained; is too little and inſufficient:

Becauſe indeed, my heart cannot truly reſt, nor be fully contented, unleſs it reſt in *Thee*, and tranſcend all gifts, and creatures.

3. O my moſt beloved Spouſe, CHRIST JESUS, the moſt *pure Lover*; Lord of all creatures, Who will give me wings of true liberty to fly and reſt in *thee*?

O, when ſhall it be fully granted me

me, to attend to my self, and see how sweet *thou my Lord God art.* Psal. 45.

When shall I fully recollect my self in *thee*, that through *thy love* I may not feel my self, but *thee* alone, above all sense, and manner, in a manner not known unto all.

But now I frequently mourn, and bear my misfortunes with grief; because many evils happen in this vale of misery, which do often trouble, grieve, and darken me; many times hinder and distract me; allure and intangle me, that I cannot have free access to *thee*, and enjoy thy sweet embracements, ready for pious and blessed souls at all times. *Dan.* 13.

Let my sighs, and manifold desolations on earth moove *thee.*

4. O JESU, splendour of eternal glory, the comfort of a pilgrim-soul; before *thee* my tongue is with-

out voice, and my ſilence ſpeaks to *thee*.

How long doth my *Lord* delay to come?

Let *him* come to me *his* poor ſervant, and make me glad.

Let *him* ſtretch forth his hand, and deliver me from all anguiſh.

Come, come; for, without *thee* I cannot have one joyful day.

For *thou* art my joy, and, without thee, my table is empty.

I am a wretched creature, and in a manner impriſoned and loaded with fetters, until *thou* comfort me with the ſight of *thy* preſence, and give me liberty, and ſhew me a favourable countenance.

5. LET others ſeek what they pleaſe inſtead of *thee*, but for me, nothing doth, or ſhall delight me, but *thou* my *Lord God*, my hope and everlaſting health.

I will not hold my peace, nor ceaſe to pray, until *thy grace* return, and *thou* ſpeak to me *interiourly*, and ſay: *Lo, I am here! behold, I come to thee; becauſe thou haſt called upon me: thy tears, and the deſires of thy ſoul, thy humiliation, and the contrition of thy heart, have inclined and brought me to thee.*

And I ſaid, *Lord*, I have called upon *thee*, and I deſire to enjoy *thee*, being ready to forſake all things for *thee*.

For, *Thou* didſt firſt excite me to ſeek thee.

Bleſſed be *thou* therefore, O *Lord*; who haſt ſhewed this goodneſs to *thy* ſervant, according to the multitude of *thy* mercies.

6. WHAT hath *thy* ſervant more to ſay before *thee*, but that he greatly humble himſelf in *thy* ſight, al-

wayes mindful of his own iniquity and baſeneſs?

For, There is none like unto thee in all whatſoever is wonderful in heaven or earth: Thy words are good, thy judgments are true, and by thy providence all things are governed, Pſal. 85.

Praiſe therefore and glory be unto thee, O wiſdom of the eternal Father; let my tongue, my ſoul, and all creatures together bleſs and praiſe Thee.

CHAP. XXII.

Of the remembrance of the manifold Benefits of God.

1. OPEN my heart, O *Lord*, in *thy* Law; and teach me to walk in thy commandments.

Grant me to underſtand thy will; and to remember *thy* benefits as well

well in general as in particular, with great reverence, and diligent conſideration, that hence-forward I may be able worthily to give *thee* thanks.

But I know and confeſs, that I am not able to give *thee* due thanks, for the favours which *thou* beſtoweſt upon me: even in the leaſt moment, I am leſs than the leaſt of thy benefits; and, when I conſider the excellency of *thy Majeſty*, the greatneſs thereof makes my ſpirit to faint.

2. ALL that we have in our ſoul or body, and whatſoever we poſſeſs outwardly, or *inwardly*, naturally, or *ſpiritually*, are *thy* benefits; and do praiſe *thee* as bountiful, pious, and good, from whom we have received all that is good.

And although one hath received more, another leſs, notwithſtanding

ing all are *thine*; and without *thee* even the leaſt cannot be had.

He that hath received greater, cannot glory of his own deſert; nor extol himſelf above others, nor inſult over the leſſer.

For he is greateſt, and beſt that aſcribes leaſt unto himſelf; and is more humble, and devout in rendring thanks.

And he that eſteems himſelf baſeſt of all men, and judgeth himſelf moſt unworthy, is fitteſt to receive greateſt bleſſings.

3. AND he that hath received fewer, ought not to be ſorry, nor bear it impatiently, nor envy them that are inriched with greater ſtore; but attend rather unto *Thee*; and chiefly praiſe *thy* goodneſs, for that *thou* beſtoweſt *thy* gifts ſo bountifully, ſo freely, and ſo willingly without reſpect of perſons.

All

All things proceed from *thee*, and therefore in all things thou art to be praiſed.

Thou knowſt what is fit to be given to every one; and, why this man hath leſs and another more, is not ours to determine but *thine*, who doſt weigh in juſt meaſure the deſerts of every one.

4. WHEREFORE, my *Lord God*, I eſteem it as a great benefit, not to have much, whereby outwardly, and before men, I might ſeem worthy of praiſe and glory.

So that he that conſiders his own poverty and baſeneſs ought not to be grieved or ſorrowful or troubled at it; but rather, to take great comfort, and to be glad:

For, That thou, ô Lord, haſt choſen the poor and humble and deſpiſed of this world, for thy ſelf, and for thy familiar and houſhold friends;

friends (Pſal.44. 1 Cor.1. 1 Theſ. 2.) thy Apoſtles themſelves are witneſſes, *whom thou haſt appointed princes over all the earth.*

And yet they lived without complaint in the world; ſo humble and mean to the eyes of men without all malice, and deceit, that they rejoyced to receive diſgrace and contempt for *thy Name*, and, what the world abhorrs, they imbraced with great affection.

5. NOTHING therefore ought ſo to rejoyce him that loves *thee*, and acknowledgeth *Thy benefits*, as the accompliſhment of *Thy* will in himſelf, and the pleaſure of *Thy eternal appointment*; wherewith he ought to be ſo contented, and comforted, that he would as willingly be the leaſt, as any would wiſh to be the greateſt: and as peaceable and content in the laſt, as in the firſt

first place, and as willing to be despised, and contemned, and to be of no esteem or account as to be preferred in honour and esteem, before all the world.

For, *Thy* will, and the *love* of *thine honour* ought to comfort him more, and to please him better, than all the benefits which he hath received, or can be given.

CHAP. XXIII.

Of Four things which bring much peace.

1. SON, Now I will teach thee the way of *peace*, and *true* liberty.

Do, *Lord*, I beseech *thee*, as *thou* sayst; for, I shall be very glad to hear it.

Endeavour, my son, to do rather the

the will of another, than thine own, Mat. 26.

Ever chooſe rather to have leſs than more.

Always ſeek the loweſt place, and to be inferiour to every one.

Wiſh, and pray, that the will of God may be fulfilled in thee.

Behold, ſuch a man enters into the limits of *peace*, and moſt *quiet reſt!*

2. LORD, this *thy* ſhort ſpeech contains much perfection.

It is little in words, but full in ſenſe, and abundant in fruit.

For, if it could be exactly kept by me, I ſhould not be ſo eaſily troubled.

For, as often as I feel my ſelf unquiet, and afflicted, I find I have ſtrayed from this doctrine.

But, *Thou* who canſt do all things, & ever loveſt the good & profit of my

my ſoul, increaſe in me thy grace, that I may fullfil *thy* word, and perfect my own health.

A Prayer againſt evil Thoughts.

5. *MY Lord God, be not far from me; my God have regard to help me: for, ſundry thoughts have riſen up againſt me, and great fears afflicting my ſoul.* Pſal. 70.

How ſhall I paſs through them without hurt? how ſhall I break them?

I (ſaith He) *will go before thee, and will humble the glorious of the earth.* Eſay. 25.

I will open the doors of the priſon, and reveal unto thee hidden ſecrets.

Do, Lord, as thou ſayſt; and let all evil thoughts flee from before thy face.

This is my hope and my only comfort, To fly unto thee in all tribulation;

tion; To trust in thee, To call on thee from my heart, and To expect patiently thy comfort.

A Prayer for the inlightening of the mind

4. *ENLIGHTEN me, good* JESU, *with the cleerness of inward light, and expel all darkness of my heart.*

Repress the many wandring thonghts, and beat down the furies of the temptations which violently assault me.

Fight strongly for me and vanquish the evil beasts, that is, the allurements Concupiscences; that pease may be made in thy virtue, and abundance of praise in thy holy court, which is a pure Conscience.

Command the winds, and tempest, say unto the Sea, Be still, and to the North-wind, Blow not; and a great Calm shall ensue. Mat. 8. 5. SEN

5. *SEND forth thy light; and thy truth that they may shine upon the earth; for, I am empty and unprofitable earth, until thou imparteſt thy light upon me.* Pſal. 42.

Pour out thy grace from above, waſh my heart with heavenly dew; give water of devotion to waſh the face of the earth, to bring forth good, and perfect fruits.

Liſt up my mind, over-charged with the weight of ſin, draw up my whole deſire to heavenly Treaſures, that having taſted the ſweetneſs of heavenly Happineſs, it may loath to think of earthly Vanities.

6. TAKE *me violently to thee, and deliver me from all unſtable comfort of creatures; for, no created thing can fully quiet and ſatisfie my deſire.*

Joyn me unto Thee, with an inſeparable

separable bond of love; for, thou only fillest the mind of him that loves thee; and, without thee, all things are distastful.

CHAP. XXIIII.

Of flying curious inquiry into the life of others.

1. SON, Be not curious, trouble not thy self with idle cares. *Eccl.3. 1 Tim.5.*

What is this, or that, to thee? Do thou follow *me*. *Joh.21.*

For; What is it to thee, whether that man be such, or no, or whether this man do, or speak this or that?

Thou shalt not need to answer for others, but shalt give account of thy self.

Behold *I* know every one, and

he is, and do see all things that are under the Sun, and do understand how it is with every one, what he thinks, what he would, and at what his intention aimes.

All things therefore are to be committed unto *me*; But, do thou keep thy self in good peace, and suffer the unquiet to do as they will.

Whatsoever they shall have done or said, shall fall on themselves for they cannot deceive *me*.

2. DESIRE not too great fame in this world, *nor* to be known to many; nor to have the private love of men; for, these things breed distractions, and cause great darkness in the heart.

I would willingly utter *my* words, and reveal *my* secrets unto thee; if thou didst diligently observe my coming, and didst open the door of thy heart unto *me*. Be

Be careful and watch in prayer, and humble thy ſelf in all things.

CHAP. XXV.

Wherein true peace of heart, and true profit, doth conſiſt.

1. SON, I have ſaid, *Peace I leave to you, my peace I give unto you. Not as the world giveth, do I give.* Joh. 14.

All do deſire *peace*, but all care not for thoſe things that appertain to *true peace*.

My peace is with the humble, and meek of heart.

Thy *peace*, ſhall be in much patience.

If thou wilt hear *me*, and follow *my* voice, thou mayſt enjoy much *peace*.

What then ſhall I do, Lord?

In every thing thou doſt or ſayſt, attend unto thy ſelf; and direct thy whole intention unto this; that thou mayeſt pleaſe me alone, and deſire and ſeek nothing out of *Me*.

Judg nothing raſhly of the ſayings or doings of others, and do not intangle thy ſelf with things that are not committed to thee: and doing this it may be thou ſhalt be ſeldom or little troubled.

2. But, Never to feel any trouble at all, nor to ſuffer any grief of heart, or body; is not the ſtate of this life, but of everlaſting *reſt*.

Think not therefore, that thou haſt found *true peace* if thou feeleſt no ſorrow, nor that then all is well, if thou have no adverſary; nor that it is perfect, if all things be done according to thy deſire.

Neither do thou then eſteem highly of thy ſelf, or imagin thy

ſelf

ſelf to be eſpecially beloved, i
thou be in great devotion and
ſweetneſs; for, a true lover of vir
tue is not tryed in theſe things, no
doth the profit and perfection o
man conſiſt in having them.

3. WHEREIN then, Lord?
In offering thy ſelf from the ver
bottom of thy heart to the *divin*
Will, not ſeeking thine own intereſt
or commodity, either in great, o
little, in time, or eternity.

So that with equal countenanc
thou mayſt perſiſt in thankſgivin
both in proſperity and adverſity
weighing all things in an equal ba
lance.

If thou art of ſuch courage, an
ſo patient in hope, that when *i*
ward comfort is wirhdrawn fro
thee, thou prepareſt thy heart to ſu
fer greater things, and not juſtifie t
ſelf as though thou oughteſt not
ſuff

ſuffer theſe and ſo great afflictions; but juſtifie *Me* in whatſoever I appoint, and praiſe *my* holy name; then thou walkeſt in the *true* and right way of *peace*, and thou ſhalt ſee my face again with great joy.

And if thou attain to the full contempt of thy ſelf, then ſhalt thou enjoy as great aboundance of *peace* as thy baniſhment may permit.

CHAP. XXVI.

Of the excellency of a free mind; which humble Prayer better deſerves than Reading.

1. LORD, it is the work of a *perfect* man, never to ſlack his mind from the attentive thought of heavenly things, and to paſs through many cares as it were without care; not faintingly, but with a certain priviledg of a *free* mind, that adheres

heres not to any creature by inordinate affection.

2. I beſeech thee, moſt merciful *God*, preſerve me from the cares of this life, leſt I ſhould be too much intangled thereby; and from the many neceſſities of the body, leſt I ſhould be enthralled by pleaſure: and from all hinderances of the ſoul, leſt broken with troubles I ſhould be dejected and diſmayed:

I mean not, from thoſe things that all worldly vanity ſo greatly deſires; but, from thoſe miſeries that, as puniſhments, weigh down, and hinder the ſoul of thy ſervant, with the general curſe of mortality, that it cannot enter into liberty of ſpirit, ſo often as it would. *Rom.* 7.

3. *O MY GOD, the unſpeakable ſweetneſs*, make all carnal comfort bitter unto me, and whatever may draw

draw me from the love of everlaſting happineſs, and wickedly allure me to it ſelf, with the force of a certain preſent delight.

Let not fleſh and blood overcome me, O Lord; let not the world, and the ſhort glory thereof deceive me; let not the Devil, and his ſubtile fraud, ſupplant me.

Give me power to reſiſt, patience to ſuffer, and conſtancy to perſevere. *Rom.* 2.

Give me, inſtead of all the comforts of the world, the moſt ſweet Unction of *thy Spirit*; and, in lieu of carnal love, pour into my ſoul the *love* of *thy name*.

4. BEHOLD, meat, drink, cloathing, and other neceſſaries for the maintenance of the body are burdenſome unto a fervent *ſpirit*.

Grant me to affect ſuch nouriſhments in due meaſure, and not to

be intangled with an over-great desire of them.

It is not lawful to renounce them wholy (for that, Nature is to be maintained): but, To desire superfluities, and those things that do rather delight and sustain, thy holy Law forbids.

For, otherwise, the flesh would rebell against the *Spirit*.

Herein, I beseech *thee*, let thy hand govern me, and teach me that I may not exceed.

CHAP. XXVII.

That private love most hinders from the chiefest Good.

1. SON, thou ought'st to give all for all, and to retain nothing to thy self.

Know that the love of thy self hurts

hurts thee more than any thing in the world.

According to the affection thou beareſt them, ſo doth every thing cleave unto thee, more or leſs.

If thy love be *pure*, ſimple, and well ordered; thou ſhalt be free from bondage.

Covet not that which thou mayſt not have.

Deſire not that which may hinder, and deprive thee of inward liberty.

It is a wonderful thing, that thou committeſt not thy ſelf wholy unto Me from the bottom of thy heart, with all things that thou canſt deſire or have.

2. WHY doſt thou conſume thy ſelf with vain grief? why tireſt thou thy mind with needleſs cares?

Reſign thy ſelf to *my* good pleaſure, and thou ſhalt feel no loſs at all.

If thou ſeekeſt this or that, or wouldeſt be here and there to enjoy thine own commodity or pleaſure; thou ſhalt never be quiet, nor free from trouble of mind.

For, in every thing, ſomewhat will be wanting; and in every place, there will be ſomewhat that will croſs thee.

3. Not every external thing therefore attained, and heaped together, helps thee: but it rather avails, if thou deſpiſe it, and doſt root it out from thy heart; which thou muſt not underſtand onely of thy revenues and wealth, but of the deſire of honour alſo, and vain praiſe: All which paſſeth away with this fading world.

The place avails little, if the *ſpirit* of fervour be wanting, neither ſhall that *peace* long continue which is ſought abroad, if the ſtate of thy heart

heart be deſtitute of a *true* foundation, that is, Unleſs thou perſiſt in *me* thou mayſt change, but not better thy ſelf.

For, When occaſion doth happen, thou ſhalt find that which thou ſoughtſt to fly, and perhaps more.

A Prayer for cleanſing of the heart, and obtaining of heavenly wiſdom.

4. CONFIRM *me, Lord, with the grace of thy holy Spirit; give me power to ſtrengthen my inward man, and to purge my heart from all unprofitable care and grief,* Pſal. 50. Eph. 3.

Grant that I be not drawn away with ſundry deſires of any thing, either little or great, but to conſider all things how they are tranſitory, and do quickly fade, and that I my ſelf do alſo paſs away together with them. Matth. 6.

For nothing is permanent under the Sun, where all things are vanity and affliction of mind; O, how wise is he that ſo conſiders them. Eccl. 1. & 2.

5. GRANT *me, O Lord, heavenly wiſdom, that I may learn above all things to ſeek, and find thee; above all things to delight in thee: and to love thee, and to think of all created things, as they are according to the diſpoſition of thy wiſdom.*

Grant me prudently to avoid him that flatters me; and to ſuffer patiently him that contradicts me.

It is great wiſdom, not to be moved with every blaſt of words, nor to give ear to dangerous flattery: for, ſo we ſhall ſhall walk ſecurely in the way we have begun.

CHAP.

CHAP. XXVIII.

Againſt the tongues of Slanderers.

1. SON, be not grieved, if ſome think ill of thee, and ſpeak what thou doſt not willingly hear.

Thou oughteſt to judg the worſt of thy ſelf, and to think no man weaker than thy ſelf. 1 *Cor.* 4.

If thou walk according to the *ſpirit*, thou wilt not much eſteem of flying words.

It is no ſmall wiſdom to be ſilent in time of evil, and inwardly to turn to *me*, and not to be troubled with the judgment of men.

2. LET not thy *peace* be in the tongues of men; for, whether they judg ill, or well, thou art nevertheleſs alwayes the ſame.

Where is *true peace*, and *true* glory? Is it not in *me*?

And he who covets not to pleaſe, nor fears to diſpleaſe men, ſhall enjoy much *peace*.

From inordinate love, and vain fear, ariſeth all diſquiet of heart, and diſtraction of the ſenſes.

CHAP. XXIX.

How we ought to call upon God, and bleſs him, when tribulation draweth near.

1. BLESSED, O *Lord*, be thy name for ever, ſince it pleaſeth thee, that this temptation, and tryall, ſhould fall upon me. *Job.* 1.

I cannot flye it, but have need to flye to *Thee*, that *Thou* may'ſt help me, and turn it to my good.

Lord, I am now afflicted, and it

is

is not well with me, I am much troubled with this preſent paſſion.

And now (*beloved Father*) what ſhall I ſay? I am taken, *Lord*, in narrow ſtreights; ſave me in this hour; yea, therefore I am fallen into this hour, that thou mayſt be glorified, when I ſhall be greatly humbled, and delivered by *thee*. *Matt.* 26.

Let it pleaſe *thee*, *Lord*, to deliver me; for, poor wretch that I am, what can I do, and whither ſhall I go without *thee?*

Grant patience, *O Lord*, this time alſo. *Pſal.* 39.

Help me, *O Lord*, and then I will not fear how much I am oppreſſed.

2. AND now in this what ſhall I ſay? Lord, Thy will be done.

I have well deſerved to be afflicted and grieved.

Surely, I ought to bear it, and I would

would to God I might bear it with patience, until the tempeſt be paſſed over, and it become calm.

But, *Thy omnipotent hand* is able to take this temptation from me, and to aſſwage the violence therof, that I ſink not utterly under it; as, oftentimes heretofore, thou haſt done unto me, *my Lord, my mercy. Matt. 6.*

And how much the more hard it is to me, ſo much the more eaſie is this change of *thy mighty hand* to *Thee.* Pſal. 76.

CHAP. XXX.

Of craving the divine aid; and confidence of recovering grace.

1. SON, *I* am thy *Lord*, who do uſe to give comfort in the day of tribulation.

Come

Come unto Me when it is not well with thee. Nahum. 1.

This is that which moſt of all hinders heavenly comfort, that thou art ſlow in turning thy ſelf to prayer.

For, before thou doſt earneſtly recommend thy ſelf to *me*, thou ſeekeſt many comforts, and delighteſt thy ſelf in outward things. *Mat.* 11.

And hence it comes, that all doth little profit thee, until thou conſider that *I* am *he*, that deliver thoſe that truſt in *me*, and that out of *me* there is neither powerful help, nor profitable counſel, nor remedy that can continue.

But now, thou having recovered breath after the tempeſt, gather ſtrength again in the light of *my mercies*; for, I am at hand, ſaith our Lord, to repair all, not onely intirely, but aboundantly. *Matt.* 23.

2. Is

2. Is there any thing hard to *me?* or am I like to him that promiſeth, and performeth not? *Jer.* 32.

Where is thy faith? Be firm and conſtant.

Take courage, and be patient; comfort will be given thee in due time.

Expect me, expect: I will come and cure thee.

It is a temptation that vexeth thee, and a vain fear that frights thee.

What elſe doth the care of future incertainties bring thee, but ſorrow upon ſorrow?

Sufficient to the day are the evils thereof, Matth. 6.

It is a vain and unprofitable thing to be grieved or to rejoyce for future things that perhaps will never happen.

3. But

3. BUT it is incident to man, to be deluded with ſuch imaginations, and a ſign of little courage to be ſo eaſily drawn away by the ſuggeſtions of the enemy.

For he cares not ſo he may delude, and deceive thee, whether it be true or falſe, which he propoſeth, whether he overthrow thee with the love of preſent, or the fear of future things.

Let not therefore thy heart be troubled, neither do thou fear: believe in *me*, and put thy truſt in *my mercy*. *Pſal.* 90.

When thou think'ſt *I* am fartheſt from thee, oftentimes *I* am neereſt unto thee.

When thou judgeſt that almoſt all is loſt, then oftentimes greateſt gain of merit is at hand.

All is not loſt when any thing falls out contrary to thee.

Thou

Thou muſt not judg according to that which thou feeleſt for the preſent; nor give thy ſelf over to any grief from whence ſoever it comes, as though all hope of delivery were quite gone.

4. THINK not thy ſelf wholy loſt, although for a time *I* have ſent thee ſome tribulation, or withdrawn thy deſired comfort; for, this is the way to the Kingdom of heaven.

And without doubt, it is more expedient for thee, and the reſt of *my* ſervants, that ye be exerciſed with many adverſities; than that ye ſhould have all things according to your deſires.

I know the ſecret thoughts of thy heart, and that it is very expedient for thy ſouls health, that thou be left ſometimes without any taſt, or feeling of *ſpiritual* ſweetneſs, leſt

perhaps

perhaps thou ſhouldſt be puffed up with good ſucceſs, and ſhouldſt pleaſe thy ſelf in that which thou art not.

What *I* have given, *I* can take away, and reſtore it again when *I* pleaſe.

5. WHEN *I* give, it is *mine*; when *I* withdraw, *I* take not any thing that is thine: for, *every good and perfect gift is mine*, James 1.

IF *I* ſend thee afflictions, or any croſs whatſoever, repine not, nor be diſmayed; *I* can quickly lift thee up again, and turn all thy ſorrows into joy.

Nevertheleſs *I* am juſt, and greatly to be praiſed, when *I* do all this unto thee.

6. IF thou beeſt rightly wiſe, and truly conſidereſt thy caſe, thou wouldſt never yield ſo cowardly to

to grief for any adverſity that befalls thee, but rather rejoyce, and give thanks.

Yea to account this thy only joy, that *I* do not ſpare thee in afflicting thee with ſorrows.

As my Father hath loved me, I alſo love you, ſaid I unto my beloved diſciples. *Joh.* 15.

Whom certainly, I ſent not to temporal joys, but to great conflicts; not to honours, but to contempt; not to idleneſs, but to labours; not to reſt, but to bring forth much fruit in patience. My Son, remember theſe words.

CHAP. XXXI.

Of the contempt of all creatures to find the Creator.

1. MY LORD, I ſtand yet in need of great grace, if I muſt

muſt go ſo farr as that no man, or creature may hinder me.

For, as long as any thing holds me, I cannot fly freely to thee.

He deſired to fly with great liberty that ſaid, *Who will give me wings like a Dove, and I will fly and be at reſt.* Pſal. 54.

What thing more quiet than a ſimple eye; and what more free than he that deſires nothing upon earth? *Matt.* 6.

Man ought therefore to aſcend above all creatures, and perfectly to forſake himſelf, and to remain in exceſs of mind; and conſider that, *Thou*, who art the maker of all things, haſt nothing among creatures like unto *Thee.*

And unleſs a man be free from the affection of all creatures, he cannot with freedom of mind attend unto divine things.

And this is the cauſe there are ſo

few

few contemplative men to be found; for that few can sequester themselves wholy from fading creatures.

2. MUCH *grace* is necessary to lift up a soul, and to carry it above it self.

And unless a man be lifted up in *Spirit*, and delivered from all creatures, and wholy united unto *God*, whatsoever he knows, and whatsoever he hath, is of little account.

Long shall he be little, and grovel in earthly baseness, that esteems any thing great, but the only *unmeasurable, and eternal Goodness.*

For, whatsoever is not *God*, is nothing; and ought to be accounted as nothing.

There is great difference between the wisdom of a spiritual illuminated devout man, and the knowledg of a learned studious Clerk.

Farr

Farr more noble is that learning which comes from above, from the divine influence, than that which is painfully got by the wit of man.

3. THERE are many that desire contemplation, but they endeavour not to exercise those things that are required thereunto.

It is a great hinderance that we rest in signes, and sensible things, and have little true mortification.

I know not what it is, nor by what spirit we are ledd, nor what we pretend who would be called *spiritual*; that we take so much pains, and so great care, for transitory base things, and scarce or seldom think of our own inward profit with full recollection of our senses.

4. ALAS, presently after a sleight recollection, we break forth, and weigh not our works with diligent examination. We

We mind not where our affections incline; nor bewail the impurity, & many faults, that are in our actions.

For, *All flesh had corrupted her way*, Gen. 6, & 7. *and therefore did that general floud ensue.*

Since therefore our inward affection is much corrupted, it must needs be, that, our actions, proceeding from them, be corrupted, as a sign of the want of inward rigour.

From a pure heart, proceeds the fruit of a good life.

5. We ask, what such a one hath done, but consider not diligently how virtuous his actions are.

We inquire, whether he be strong, rich, beautiful, handsom, a good writer, a good singer, or a good labourer:

But how poor he is in *spirit*, how patient and meek, how devout and *spiritual*, is seldom spoken of. Nature

Nature reſpects outward things; *Grace*, turns her ſelf to the *inward* virtues.

Nature is often deceived, but *grace* hath her truſt in *God* to the end ſhe be not deceived.

CHAP. XXXII.

Of the denyal of our ſelves, and forſaking all our affections.

1. SON, Thou canſt not poſſeſs perfect liberty, unleſs thou wholy deny thy ſelf.

All ſuch as are lovers of themſelves, are bound in fetters: they are covetous, curious, wanderers, ſeekers of eaſe, and not of thoſe things that appertain to JESUS CHRIST; but oftentimes deviſing, and framing that which will not continue. *Matt.* 16. & 19.

For,

For, all ſhall periſh that proceeds not from *God.*

Keep this ſhort and compleat word [*Leave all, and thou ſhalt find all.*]

Leave thine inordinate deſires, and thou ſhalt find reſt.

Conſider this well; and when thou haſt fulfilled it, thou ſhalt underſtand all.

2. LORD, this is not one days work, nor childrens ſport; yea, in this ſhort ſentence, all the perfection of religious perſons is included.

Son, thou muſt not go back, nor ſtraitwayes be dejected when thou heareſt the way of the *perfect*; but rather, be ſtirred up to more worthy and noble attempts, or at leaſt to conceive an earneſt deſire thereof.

I would it were ſo well with thee, and that thou wert come ſo far,

far, that thou wert no longer a lover of thy ſelf, but didſt ſtand meerly at *my* beck, and at his whom *I* have appointed a Father over thee; then thou ſhould'ſt exceedingly pleaſe *me*, and all thy life would paſs away in joy and *peace*.

Thou haſt yet many things to forſake, which unleſs thou wholy reſign over unto *me*, thou ſhalt not attain to that thou deſireſt.

I counſel thee to buy of me purified gold, that thou mayſt become rich, (Apoc. 3.) that is, heavenly wiſdom, which treads under foot all baſe, and earthly things.

Set little by the wiſdom of this world, and eſteem not of the contentment of men, and thine own fancies.

3. I ſaid, that thou ſhouldſt buy the mean and baſe things, with the precious, and thoſe that were of

great eſteem with men.

For, *true heavenly wiſdom* ſeems very baſe, and of ſmall account, and is ſcarce thought of by men; for that eſteems not highly of it ſelf, nor ſeeks to be magnified upon earth; which many praiſe from the teeth outward, but in their life they are from it: *yet is it the precious pearl which is hidden from many*, Matth. 13.

CHAP. XXXIII.

Of the inconſtancy of our heart, and of directing of our final intentions to God.

1. SON, Truſt not to thy affections; that which now is will quickly change into another *Job* 14.

As long as thou liveſt, thou art ſub jec

ſubject to change, even againſt thy will.

So that now thou art merry, now ſad; now quiet, anon troubled; now devout, now diſtracted; now diligent, now idle; now heavy, now light.

But he that is wiſe and well inſtructed in *ſpirit*, remains alwayes one in the middeſt of theſe changes, not heeding what he feels in himſelf, nor which way the wind of mutability blows, but that the whole intention of his mind, may tend as it ought to the moſt perfect and beſt end.

And ſo he may continue one and the ſelf-ſame, without any change in the midſt of ſo many ſundry changes and chances; directing alwayes the ſincere eye of his intention upon *Me*.

2. AND, how much purer the

eye of the *intention* is (*Matt.* 6.) ſo much the more conſtantly doth he paſs through the variety of many contrary ſtorms.

But in many things the eye of a *ſincere intention* waxeth blind; for, it quickly looks on ſome delightſome object that happeneth.

And it is rare to find one wholy free from all blemiſh of ſelf-ſeeking.

So the Jews, in time paſt, came into Bethany *to* Martha *and* Mary; *not for* JESUS *alone, but to ſee* Lazarus *alſo.* Joh. 11.

The eye of our *intention*, therefore, is to be purged, that it may be ſincere, and pure; and to be directed unto *me*, neglecting the multitude, and variety of earthly objects.

CHAP. XXXIV.

That God is ſweet above all things, and in all things, to him that loves Him.

1. BEHOLD my *God* and All! What would I have more, and what can I deſire more happy? O ſweet and comfortable word! but to him that *loves* the *word*, not the world, nor thoſe things that are in the world.

My God and All! Enough is ſaid to him that underſtands, and it is pleaſant to him that loves to repeat it often.

For when *Thou* art preſent, all things yield delight; but when *Thou* art abſent, all becomes irkſome.

Thou giveſt quiet of heart, and much *peace*, and pleaſant joy.

Thou makeſt men think well of

all, and praiſe *thee* in all things, neither can any thing pleaſe us long without *thee*.

But if it be pleaſant and delightſome, *thy grace* muſt be preſent; and it muſt be ſeaſoned with the ſweetneſs of *thy wiſdom*.

2. WHAT can be diſtaſteful to him, to whom *thou* art pleaſing? and what can be pleaſant to him, whom *thou* delighteſt not. *Rom.* 6.

But the wiſe of the world, who have their contentment in ſenſual things, cannot attain to thy wiſdom; for, in the world is much vanity, and *in the fleſh is death*.

But they that follow *thee* by the contempt of worldly things, and mortification of the fleſh, are proved to be truly wiſe. 1 *Joh.* 2.

For they are changed from vanity to *truth*, from fleſh to *ſpirit*.

To

To theſe God is ſweet, and what good ſoever is found in creatures, they wholy refer unto the praiſe of their *Maker*.

Notwithſtanding; great, yea very great is the difference between the ſweetneſs of the *Creator*, and of the creature; of *eternity*, and of time; of *uncreated*, and created light.

3. O Everlaſting *light*, ſurpaſſing all created lights, caſt forth the beams of thy brightneſs from above, and pierce the moſt *inward* corners of my heart: purifie, rejoyce, clarifie and quicken my *ſpirit*, with all the powers thereof; that I may cleave unto thee with exceſs of unſpeakable joy.

O, When will that bleſſed, and deſired hour come, that I may be filled with *thy* preſence, and *Thou* mayeſt be unto me *all* in all things.

As-long as this is not granted me,

I ſhall not have full, or perfect joy.

Alas! My old man yet lives in me, he is not wholy crucified, he is not perfectly dead. *Rom.* 7.

He doth yet covet ſtrongly againſt the *ſpirit*, and moves civil warrs, and ſuffers not the Kingdom of my ſoul to be in *peace*.

But, *Thou* who ruleſt the powers of the Sea, and aſſwageſt the motion of the waves, riſe and help me.

Diſſipate the people that deſire warr, and deſtroy them in thy might, and let thy hand be glorified.

For, there is no hope nor refuge for me, but in thee my Lord God, Pſal. 68. 88,89,90.

CHAP.

CHAP. XXXV.

That there is no security from Temptation in this life.

1. SON, There is no security in this life; as-long as thou liveſt, thou ſhalt alwayes have need of ſpiritual armour. *Job* 7. 1 *Cor.* 6. Thou liveſt amongſt enemies, and art aſſaulted on all ſides.

If therefore thou defendeſt not thy ſelf on every ſide, with the ſhield of patience, thou canſt not be long unwounded.

Moreover, if thou fix not thy heart on *me* with a ſincere will to ſuffer all things for *me*, thou canſt not ſuſtain the heat of this battel; nor get that victorious Crown, which they have that are in Glory.

Thou oughtſt therefore manfully to go through all, and to uſe a

ſtrong hand againſt whatſoever withſtands thee.

For, *To him that overcomes Manna is given*, *Apoc.* 2. and to the negligent is left much miſery.

2. IF thou ſeekeſt reſt in this Life; how wilt thou then attain to everlaſting-*reſt*?

Give not thy ſelf to much eaſe; but, to much patience.

Seek *true peace*, not on earth, but in heaven; not in men, nor in any creature, but in *God* alone.

Thou oughtſt for the love of *God* to undergo labours willingly, to endure griefs, temptations, vexations, anxieties, neceſſities, infirmities, injuries, detractions, reprehenſions, humiliations, confuſions, corrections, and contempts: theſe help to the attaining of virtue, theſe try a Novice of *Chriſt*, theſe merit a heavenly Crown.

I will give an everlasting reward for a short labour, and infinite glory for transitory confusion.

3. THINKS'T thou, that thou shalt have spiritual consolations always at will?

My Saints had not so, but many afflictions, and sundry temptations, and many discomforts: all which they endured patiently, and trusted rather in *God*, than in themselves; *knowing that the sufferings of this time are not condign to the deserving of future glory.* Rom. 8.

Wilt thou have that streightways, which many, after tears and great labours, have hardly obtained?

Expect the Coming of thy *Lord*, do manfully, be of good courage, fear not, do not fly; but offer both body and soul for the glory of *God*.

I will reward thee in the moſt plentiful manner, and I will be with thee in all thy tribulation, Pſal. 26.

CHAP. XXXVI.

Againſt the vain judgments of men.

1. SON, Fix thy heart ſtedfaſtly on our *Lord*; and fear not the judgments of men, when thy conſcience gives teſtimony of thy juſtice, and innocence.

It is a good and happy thing, to ſuffer in that ſort; neither will it be burdenſome to an humble mind, nor to him that truſts rather in *God* than in himſelf.

The moſt part of men are given to talk much, and therefore little *heed* is to be had of their words, neither is it poſſible to ſatisfie all.

Though the Apoſtle endeavour-

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ed to pleaſe all in our Lord, and made himſelf all unto all, yet he little regarded that he was judged by humane day. 1 *Cor.* 9. 2 *Cor.* 4. *Col.* 1.

2. He did for the edification, ſatisfaction, and health of others, as much as he could, and lay in him; yet, could he not hinder, but that he was judged and deſpiſed by others.

Therefore he committed all to *God*, that knows all, and defended himſelf with patience and humility againſt evil tongues, and ſuch as thought vanities and lies, and ſpake what they liſted.

Yet, ſometimes notwithſtanding he anſwered, leſt the weak might have received ſcandal by his ſilence. *Acts* 16. *Phil.* 2.

3. Who art thou that feareſt a mortal

mortal man? To day he is, and to morrow doth not appear.

Fear *God*; and the terrour of men ſhall not trouble thee. *Mark* 2.

What harm can the words or injuries of any do thee? He rather hurts himſelf than thee, *neither can he avoid the judgment of God, be he what he will*, Rom. 2.

Set God before thine eyes, and contend not with complaining words. 1 *Cor.* 11.

And if for the preſent, thou ſeemeſt to be trodden down, and to ſuffer ſhame and confuſion, without deſert; do not repine, and leſſen thy crown by impatience: but rather lift up thine eyes to *Me* in heaven, *I* am able to deliver thee from all ſhame, and wrong; and to repay every one according to their works. *Heb.* 12.

CHAP. XXXVII.

Of a full and pure resignation of our selves, for the obtaining freedom of heart.

1. SON, *Leave thy self, and thou shal find Me*, Matth. 16.

Make choice of nothing, appropriate nothing to thy self, and thou shalt ever gain.

For, Greater *grace* shall alwayes be given thee, when thou dost perfectly resign thy self, and not turn back to take thy self again.

Lord, how often shall I resign my self, and wherein shall I forsake my self?

Always, and in every thing, as well in little as in great, I do except nothing, but do require that thou *be as it were naked, and void of all things:*

Otherwise, how canst thou be perfectly

perfectly *mine*, and *I* thine? unleſs both within, and without thou be free from all ſelf-will.

And, how much the ſooner thou doſt this, ſo much the better thou ſhalt find thy ſelf; and, how much the more fully and ſincerely thou doſt it, ſo much the more ſhalt thou pleaſe me, and ſo much the more ſhalt thou gain.

2. SOME there are, who reſign themſelves, but with ſome exceptions; for, they put not their whole truſt in *God*, and therefore labour to provide for themſelves.

Some alſo at the firſt do offer all, but afterwards being aſſaulted with temptations, return again to what they left; and therefore proceed not in the way of virtue.

Theſe ſhall not attain to the *true liberty of a pure heart*, nor to the *grace of my divine familiarity*; unleſs

leſs they firſt make an entire reſignation, and offer themſelves a daily ſacrifice to *Me*.

For, without this thou canſt not obtain that *union* with *Me*, wherewith my Saints enjoy *Me*.

3. I have often ſaid unto thee, and now ſay again the ſame; *Forſake thy ſelf, reſign thy ſelf, and thou ſhalt enjoy eternal peace.* Matt. 16.

Give *all for all*; ſeek nothing, require nothing; repoſe thy ſelf purely, and with a full confidence in *Me*: and *I* will give *my ſelf* unto thee; and darkneſs ſhall not overwhelm thee.

Let this be thy whole endeavour, let this be thy prayer, let this be thy deſire, That, caſting off all propriety, thou mayſt all-naked, follow thy naked Saviour JESUS, and dying to thy ſelf, mayſt live eternally to *Me*.

Then,

Then ſhall vain fancies. evil perturbations, and all ſuperfluous cares fly away; then immoderate fear ſhall leave thee, and inordinate love ſhall die.

Chap. XXXVIII.

Of good Government in outward things; and, Of recourſe to God in dangers.

1. SON, Thou oughteſt with all diligence to procure that in every place or action, or external buſineſs, thou be inwardly free, and maſter of thy ſelf; and that all things be under thy diſpoſition, and thou not ſubject to them; that thou mayſt be Lord, and Maſter of thy actions, not a ſervant, or an hireling; but rather a freeman, and a true Hebrew, belonging to the lot, atd freedom of the Sons of *God*, who

who put preſent things under their feet, and place their thoughts on that which is eternal; who look on tranſitory things with the left eye, and, with the right, behold the things of heaven; who ſuffer not themſelves to be drawn to cleave unto them, but rather diſpoſe, and uſe them, as they are ordained by *God*, and appointed by the Creatour of all; Who hath left nothing in his creatures, without due order.

1. IF thou remain firm, and ſtedfaſt in all events, and doſt not weigh by the outward appearances, nor with a carnal eye the things which thou ſeeſt, and hear'ſt; but preſently on every occaſion doſt enter with *Moſes* into the Tabernacle, to aſk counſel of our *Lord*; thou ſhalt ſometimes hear the divine, and celeſtial Oracle; and ſhalt return inſtructed of many

many things, both preſent, and future. *Exod.* 33.

Moſes had always recourſe to the Tabernacle, for the deciding of all doubts, and obſcure queſtions, and fled to the help of *prayer* for remedy of the iniquity, and dangers of men. *Joſ.* 9.

So oughteſt thou in like manner to fly to the cloſet of thine heart, earneſtly craving the *divine* help and ſuccour.

For, the Scripture teſtifieth, that therefore was *Joſhua*, and the Children of Iſrael deceived by the *Gibeonites*, becauſe they conſulted not firſt with *God*, but giving credit too lightly to fair words, were deluded with counterfeit piety.

CHAP. XXXIX.

That a man be not over-earneſt in his affairs.

1. SON, Always commit thy cauſe to *me*, *I* will diſpoſe well of it in due time; expect *my* ordinances, and thou ſhalt find it will be for thy good.

Lord, I do moſt willingly commit all unto *thee*; for, my care can profit little.

O that I cleaved not too much to future events, but offer'd my ſelf with all readineſs of mind to *thy divine* pleaſure.

2. MY Son, often-times a man doth earneſtly labour for that which he deſires; and when he hath gotten it, he begins to be of another mind, and not to eſteem ſo much of it

it, as he did before; for mans affections continue not long fixed on one thing but pass from one to another.

It is therefore a matter of great concernment, to forsake our selves even in the least things.

3. THE *true spiritual* profit of man consists in denying, and forsaking himself.

He that is *Resigned*, lives in great freedom, and security.

But the old Enemy, who always labours to withstand the servants of *God*, omits not at any time his wonted temptations, but day and night lies still in wait, to cast the unwary, if he can, into the snare of deceit. 1 *Pet.* 5.

Watch therefore and pray (saith our Lord) *that ye enter not into temptation*, Matt. 26.

CHAP.

CHAP. XL.

That man hath no good of himſelf; nor any thing, whereof he can glory.

1. LORD, *what is man that thou art mindful of him, or the ſon of man, that thou vouchſafeſt to viſit him,* Pſal. 6.

What hath man deſerved that *thou* ſhouldſt give him *thy grace?*

Lord, what cauſe have I to complain, if *thou* forſake me? or, what have I juſtly to ſay againſt *thee,* if *thou* doſt not what I deſire?

Surely, this I may truly think, and ſay: *Lord I am nothing, I can do nothing, I have nothing of my ſelf that is good:* but in all things I fail, and am defective, and ever tend to nothing.

And unleſs *thou* help me, and doſt

doſt *inwardly* inſtruct me, I become cold, and am diſſolved.

But thou, O Lord, art always the ſame, and endureſt for ever; always good, juſt, and holy; doing all things well, juſtly, and holily; and diſpoſing all things wiſely.

2. But I who am more inclined to fall than to go forwards, do never continue in one ſtate; for, ſeaven different times are changed over me.

Yet, doth it ſoon turn to the better, when it pleaſeth *thee*; and when *thou* vouchſafeſt to ſtretch forth *thine* helping hand.

For, *Thou* alone canſt help me without the favour of man; and ſtrengthen me, that my countenance ſhall be no more changed, but my heart ſhall be converted, and reſt in *thee* alone.

3. Where

3. WHERE-fore, if I ſhould once perfectly forſake all human comfort, either for the love of devotion, or for mine own neceſſity, which enforceth me to ſeek after *thee*, (for none elſe can comfort me); then might I well hope in *thy grace*, and rejoyce in the gift of new conſolation.

4. THANKS be to Thee, from whence all proceeds as often as it goes well with me; but I am meer vanity, and nothing before thee, an unconſtant, and weak man.

Whereof then can I glory? or why do I deſire to be eſteemed? Is it not for nothing? and this is moſt vain.

Truly, vain-glory is an evil plague, and very great vanity; becauſe it draws from true glory, and robs the Soul of heavenly *grace*.

For, whilſt a man pleaſeth himſelf, he diſpleaſeth *thee*; whilſt he gapes after the praiſe of men, he is deprived of true virtue.

5. But true glory, and holy exultation and joy, is, for a man to glory in *thee*, and not in himſelf; to rejoyce in *thy name*, and not in his own virtue; nor to delight in any creature, but for *thee*. *Abac.* 3. *Pſal.* 112.

Praiſed be *thy* name, not mine; magnified be *thy* work, not mine: let *thy* holy name be for ever bleſſed, but to me let no part of mens praiſes be given. *Joh.* 5.

Thou art my glory, thou art the joy of my heart; in thee will I glory and rejoyce all the day: but for my ſelf, I will not joy but in mine infirmities.

6. Let *the Jews ſeek the glory which*

which one man gives to another, I will desire this which is from *God* alone.

For, all humane glory, all temporal honour, all worldly highness, compared to *thy* eternal glory, is vanity and folly.

O my truth, my mercy, my God most Blessed Trinity; to Thee alone be all praise, honour, virtue, and glory, for all eternity.

CHAP. XLI.

Of the contempt of all temporal honour.

1. SON, Trouble not thy self if thou seest others honoured, and advanced; and thy self contemned and debased.

Lift up thy heart unto *me* in heaven, and the contempt from earth-

ly men will not grieve thee.

Lord, we are blind, and quickly ſeduced with vanity.

If I look well into my ſelf, I cannot ſay that any creature hath done me wrong, and therefore I cannot juſtly complain to *thee*.

2. But, becauſe I have often and grievouſly ſinned againſt *thee*, all creatures do juſtly take arms againſt me; for, ſhame and contempt is due unto me, but unto thee praiſe, honour, and glory.

And unleſs I do ſo prepare my ſelf, that I be willing, and do rejoyce to be deſpiſed, and forſaken of all creatures, and to be eſteemed nothing at all; I cannot obtain *internal* ſtrength, and *peace*, nor be ſpiritually enlightned, nor wholy united unto *thee*.

CHAP. XLII.

That our Peace is not to placed in man.

1. SON, If the *peace* thou haſt with any, be grounded on the opinion which thou haſt of him, or on the contentment thou takeſt in his company; thou ſhalt ever be unconſtant, and ſubject to diſquiet.

But, If thou have recourſe to the *everliving and eternal Truth*; a friend, going from thee, or dying, ſhall not grieve thee.

The love of thy friend ought to reſt in *me*, and for *me*; he is to be loved, whoever he be, thou thinkſt well of, and is very dear to thee in this life.

No friendſhip can avail or continue without me, neither is the love *true* and *pure*, which they

have whoſe hearts are not joyned together by *me*.

Thou oughtſt to be ſo dead to ſuch affections of beloved friends, that (for as much as appertains to thee) thou ſhouldſt wiſh to be without all humane ſociety.

Man approacheth ſo much the neerer unto *God*, how much the further off he departs from earthly comfort; alſo, he aſcends ſo much the higher into *God*, by how much the lower he deſcends into himſelf, and how much the baſer he is in his own conceit.

2. But, he that attributes any good unto himſelf, hinders the coming of *Gods grace* unto him.

For, the grace of the holy Ghoſt, ever ſeeks an humble heart. 1 Pet. 5.

If thou couldſt perfectly annihilate thy ſelf, and purge thy ſelf of all created love, then great abundance

dance of *my grace* ſhould flow in thee.

When thou caſteſt thine eyes on creatures, the ſight of thy *Creatour* is taken from thee.

Learn to overcome thy ſelf in all things, for the love of thy *Creatour* and then thou ſhalt be able to attain to heavenly knowledg.

How little ſoever it be, if it be inordinately loved, and regarded, it defiles the ſoul, and hinders the enjoying of the chiefeſt Good.

CHAP. XLIII.

Againſt vain and ſecular Knowledg.

1. SON, Let not the fair ſpeeches, and ſubtile ſayings of men move thee; for, *The Kingdom of God conſiſts not in words, but in virtue.* 1 *Cor.* 4.

Obſerve well the words which I ſpeak; for, they inflame the heart, and enlighten the mind, induce compunction, and bring ſundry comforts.

Never read to ſhew thy ſelf learned, or wiſe; but labour to mortifie thy vices, for that will profit thee more than the knowledg of hard and difficult queſtions.

2. WHEN thou ſhalt have read, and known many things; thou oughteſt alwayes to return to one beginning.

I am he that teacheth man all knowledg, and do give little ones a more clear underſtanding than can be taught by man.

He therefore to whom *I* ſpeak ſhall quickly be wiſe, and ſhall profit much in *ſpirit.*

Wo be to them that enquire many curious things, and little deſire

to

to know the way how to ſerve *me.*

The time will come when the Maſter of Maſters ſhall appear, CHRIST *the Lord of Angels,* to hear the leſſons of all; that is, to examin the conſciences of every one.

And then he will ſearch Jeruſalem with a Candle, and the hidden things of darkneſs ſhall be laid open, and the Arguments of tongues ſhall be ſilent. *Soph.* 1.

2. I am he that in an inſtant do raiſe up the humble mind, to underſtand more reaſons of the *everlaſting truth,* than can be got by ten years ſtudy in Schools.

I teach without noiſe of words, without confuſion of opinions, without contention of arguments, without ambition of honour.

I am he that teacheth to deſpiſe earthly things, to loath things preſent; to ſeek the everlaſting, to de-

light in eternal things; to fly honours, to ſuffer ſcandals, to place all hope in *me*, to deſire nothing out of *me*, and, above all things, *fervently to love me.*

4. FOR, a certain perſon by *loving me* intirely, learned divine things, ſpake wonders; he profited more in forſaking all things, than in ſtudying ſubtilties.

To ſome *I* ſpeak ordinary things, to others things more particular; to ſome *I* appear ſweetly by ſigns and figures, but to ſome *I* reveal myſteries with much light.

The voice of books is one, but it teacheth not all men alike.

For, *I* am the *internal Teacher*, *I* am the *Truth*, the ſearcher of the heart, the underſtander of thoughts, the promoter of good works, diſtributing to every one as *I* judge expedient.

CHAP.

CHAP. XLIV.

Of not drawing outward things to our ſelves.

1. SON, In many things thou ought'ſt to be ignorant, and eſteem thy ſelf as dead upon earth, and as one to whom the world is crucified.

Thou muſt alſo paſs over many things with a deaf ear, and rather think of that which appertains to thy *peace. Gal. 6.*

It is more profitable to turn thine eyes from the ſight of unpleaſing things, and to leave to every one his own opinion, than to ſtrive with contentious diſcourſes.

If thou ſtandſt well with *God*, and conſidereſt *his* judgments, thou ſhalt the more eaſily yield to the will of others.

2. O

2. O LORD, To what an eſtate are we come! We greatly bewail a temporal loſs, and for a little gain we toyl and ſpare no labour; and the ſpiritual damage of our ſouls is forgotten, and hardly ever called to mind.

That which little or nothing profits, is alwayes remembred; that which is chiefly neceſſary, is negligently paſſed over: becauſe, mans nature carrieth him to outward things; and unleſs he quickly return unto himſelf, he lieth drowned in them with delight.

CHAP.

CHAP. XLV.

That, Credit is not to be given to all men, and how prone man is to offend in words.

1. HELP *me, Lord, in my tribulation, for vain is the help of man,* Pſal. 59.

How often have I been deceived, finding want of faith where I thought it ſure?

And how often have I found faith where I leaſt expected it?

It is vain therefore to truſt in men; but the ſafety of the juſt is in thee, O *Lord.*

Bleſſed be thou, O my *God*, in all things that befall us.

We are weak, and inconſtant, quickly deceived, and ſoon changed. *Prov.* 10.

2. WHO

2. WHO is he that is able to keep himſelf ſo warily, that he never fall into any doubt, or deceit?

But he that truſts in *thee, O Lord,* and ſeeks thee with a *ſimple heart,* doth not eaſily fall: and if he fall into any tribulation, be he never ſo much enthralled, yet he ſhall quickly be delivered, or comforted by *thee.*

For *thou* wilt not forſake him for ever, that truſts in *thee.*

The friend is rare to be found, that continues faithful in his friend's diſtreſs;

But *thou, O Lord, thou art faithful at all times, and there is none like thee.*

3. O how wiſe was that holy ſoul, that ſaid, *My mind is firmly ſetled, and grounded on Chriſt.* Vita S. Agath.

If it were ſo with me, then would

not

not humane fear to easily trouble me, nor the pride of words move me.

Who can foresee all things? who is able to beware before hand of future evils?

If things, even foreseen, do often hurt us; how can things unlooked for choose but wound us grievously?

But why did I not provide better for my self, miserable wretch? why also have I so easily given credit to others?

But alas! we are men, and (God knows) weak and frail men, although by many we are reputed, and called Angels?

To whom shall I give credit, LORD? to whom but *Thee?*

Thou art the *Truth*, that neither deceivest, nor canst be deceived. And on the other side, *every man is a lyar* (*Psal.* 111.) weak, unconstant

ſtant, and ſubject to fail, eſpecially in words; and therefore we muſt not eaſily give credit even to that which in outward ſhew ſeems at firſt a certain truth.

4. O with how great wiſdom haſt *thou* warned us to take heed of men? *Mich.* 7.

And, becauſe the enemies of man are his familiar and houſhold acquaintants, not to truſt if one ſhould ſay, *Behold here, or behold there*! Matt. 24. Mar. 13.

I am taught to my coſt; and I would to God I might thereby increaſe my warineſs, and not my folly.

Be wary (ſaith one) *be wary:* keep unto thy ſelf what I tell thee: and whilſt I hold my *peace*, and think it is ſecret; he cannot keep that ſecret, which he deſired ſhould be ſecret, but preſently diſcloſeth me,

me, and himſelf, and goes his way.

From ſuch tales, and ſuch imprudent people, protect me, O *Lord*, that I fall not into their hands, nor ever commit ſuch errors.

Give me *grace*, my *God*, to obſerve *truth*, and conſtancy in my words and remove farr from me a deceitful tongue.

What I am not, willing to ſuffer, I ought by all means to avoid.

5. O, How good a thing it is to be ſilent, and not to talk of others, *Prov.* 25. nor to believe all that is ſaid, nor eaſily to report what we have heard. *Eſay.* 24. To lay ones ſelf open to few, Always to ſeek after *thee* the Beholder of the heart, nor to be carried about with every wind of words; but to deſire that all things both within, and without be accompliſh-

ed

ed according to *thy* will and pleasure.

How secure it is for the keeping of heavenly *grace* to fly the sight of men, and not to seek those things that seem to cause admiration abroad, but to follow that with all diligence which brings amendment of life, and increase of fervour.

6. To how many hath Virtue known, and over-haftily commended, been hurtful?

How profitable hath *grace* been kept with silence in this mortal life, which is nothing but a perpetual temptation and warefare? *Job* 7.

CHAP. XLVI.

Of putting our truſt in God, when evil words ariſe.

1. SON, Be conſtant, and put thy truſt in *me*.

For, what are words but words? they paſs through the air, but hurt not. *Pſal.* 36.

If thou be guilty, determine quickly to amend thy ſelf: if thou be innocent, reſolve to ſuffer this willingly for *God*.

It is a ſmall matter to ſuffer ſometimes a few words, if thou haſt not yet the courage to endure ſtripes.

And why do ſmall matters go to thine heart, but becauſe thou art yet carnal, and regardeſt men more than thou oughteſt.

Becauſe thou art afraid to be deſpiſed, therefore thou wilt not be repre-

ed according to *thy* will and pleasure.

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Becauſe thou art afraid to be deſpiſed, therefore thou wilt not be repre-

reprehended for thy faults, and therefore ſeekeſt ſhadows of excuſes.

2. But look better into thy ſelf, and thou ſhalt find that the world yet lives in thee, and a vain deſire to pleaſe men.

For when thou refuſeſt to be humbled and reproved for thy faults, it is ſurely evident that thou art neither truly humble, nor dead to the world, nor the world perfectly crucified to thee.

But give diligent ear to *my words*, and thou ſhalt little reſpect ten thouſand words ſpoken by men.

Behold, If all ſhould be ſpoken againſt thee that could be moſt maliciouſly invented, what would it hurt thee, if thou didſt permit it to paſs, and make no reckoning at all of it? Could all thoſe words pluck as much as one hair from thy head?

3. But

3. BUT he that hath not his heart ſetled *within* him, nor *God* before his eyes, is eaſily moved with every little diſpraiſe.

When as he that truſts in *me*, and confides not in his own judgment, ſhall be free from humane fears. *Pſal.* 7.

For, *I* am the *Judge*, and diſcerner of all ſecrets, *I* know how the matter paſſed; *I* know him that offers the injury, and him that ſuffers it.

From *me* hath this word proceeded, this hath happened by *my* permiſſion, *that out of many hearts, thoughts may be revealed.* Luk. 2.

I ſhall judg the guilty, and the innocent; but, by a ſecret judgment, I would before hand try them both.

4. THE teſtimony of men oftentimes

times deceives; *My* judgment is alwayes *true*, it ſhall ſtand and not be overthrown.

It is commonly hidden and ſecret, and not known in every thing but to few; notwithſtanding it never errs, neither can it erre, although to the eyes of the fooliſh, it ſeems not right.

Men ought therefore to return to me in every judgment, and not to ſtand in their own opinions. *Prov.* 12.

For, The juſt man will not be troubled what ever happens unto him from God: and if any thing be wrongfully brought forth againſt him, he will not much care, neither will he vainly be glad, if by others he be with reaſon excuſed.

For, he conſiders that I am he that ſearcheth the hearts and reins, and do judg not according to the outward face, nor humane appearance; For,

For, that is oftentimes culpable in *my* ſight, which in the judgment of men is commendable.

O Lord my *God*, the juſt Judg, ſtrong, and patient; Thou knoweſt the frailty and perverſity of man; be thou my ſtrength, and all my truth; for mine own conſcience ſufficeth me not.

Thou knoweſt that which I cannot reach unto, and therefore in every reprehenſion I ought to have born it patiently and meekly.

Vouchſafe mercifully to pardon me, as often as I have failed herin; and give me again *grace* of greater ſufferance.

For, *thy* bountiful mercy is more available to me for the obtaining of *thy* pardon, than my conceived juſtice for the defence of my hidden conſcience.

Although my conſcience accuſe me not, yet I cannot hereby juſtifie my

my ſelf (1 *Cor.*4.) For, if thy mercy be away, *no man living ſhall be juſtified in thy ſight.* Pſal. 142.

CHAP. XLVII.

That all grievous things are to be endured for Life-everlaſting.

1. SON, Let not thy pains diſmay thee, which thou haſt undertaken for *Me*; neither be thou diſcomforted, for the tribulations which do befall thee; but let *My* promiſe ſtrengthen, and comfort thee in all events.

I am able to reward thee, above all meaſure.

Thou ſhalt not long toyl here, nor always be oppreſſed with grief.

Attend awhile, and thou ſhalt ſee a ſpeedy end of thy evills.

There

There will come a time, when all labour, and trouble ſhall ceaſe. Little, and ſhort, is all that paſſeth away with Time.

2. Do as thou doſt; *Labour faithfully in my Vineyard, I will be thy reward.* Mat. 20.

Write, read, ſing, mourn, keep ſilence, pray, ſuffer croſſes manfully: Life-everlaſting is worthy of all theſe, and greater, combats.

Peace ſhall come in the day which is known unto our *Lord*, and it ſhall not be day nor night (to wit, of this time) but everlaſting *light*, infinite brightneſs, ſtedfaſt *peace*, and ſecure *reſt*.

Thou ſhalt not then ſay, *Who ſhall deliver me from the body of this death.* Rom. 7. nor cry, *Wo be unto me, for that my dwelling in a ſtrange country is prolonged!* Pſal. 119.

For Death ſhall be thrown down, and Health ſhall be without decay; no Anxiety, but bleſſed Joy, ſweet and glorious Company.

3. O, IF thou hadſt ſeen the everlaſting crowns of the Saints in heaven, and with how great glory they now rejoyce, who in times paſt were contemptible to this world, and eſteemed unworthy of life it ſelf; truly, thou wouldſt preſently humble thy ſelf even unto the earth, and wouldſt rather ſeek to be under the feet of all, than to have command ſo much as over one; neither wouldſt thou deſire pleaſant daies of this time, but rather rejoyce to be afflicted for God; and eſteem it thy greateſt gain, to be reputed as nothing among men.

4. O! IF thou hadſt a feeling of theſe things, and didſt ſuffer them to

to enter into the depth of thy heart, how durſt thou ſo much as once to complain?

Are not all painful labours to be endured for everlaſting life?

It is no ſmall matter to loſe, or to gain the *Kingdom of heaven.*

Lift up thine eyes therefore unto heaven: Behold, I and all my Saints with me, who in this world had great conflicts, do now rejoyce; now are comforted, now are ſecure, now do *reſt*; and ſhall remain with me everlaſtingly, in the Kingdom of *my Father.*

CHAP. XLVIII.

Of the everlaſting Day, and ſhortneſs of this Life.

1. O BLESSED manſion of the heavenly City! O moſt cleer day of eternity, which night obſcures not, *Apoc.* 21. but higheſt

Truth ever lighteneth!

Day, ever pleaſant, always ſerene, never changing into a contrary ſtate! O that, that-Day would once appear, and all thoſe temporal things were at an end!

To the Saints, it ſhines glittering with everlaſting brightneſs; but, to Pilgrims upon earth it appears only affarr off, and, as it were, *through a glaſs.*

2. THE Inhabitants of heaven know how joyful That-day is; but the baniſhed children of *Eve*, bewail the bitterneſs, and tedioufneſs of This.

The days of this life are ſhort and evil, full of ſorrow and anguiſh; where man is defiled with many ſins, incumbred with many paſſions, diſquieted with many ſoars, filled with many cares, diſtracted with many curioſities, intangled

wit

with many varieties, incompaſſed with many errors, tyred with many labours, vexed with many temptations, weakned with delights, tormented with wants.

3. O, WHEN will there be an end of theſe many labours! when ſhall I be delivered from the miſerable bondage of ſin! *Rom.*7. When ſhall I, O *Lord*, think of thee alone? when, ſhall I perfectly rejoyce in *thee*? *Pſal.* 70.

When ſhall I be without all impediment in true liberty? without all grief of mind, and body?

When ſhall I have firm *peace* without trooble? *peace* ſecure, *peace* within, *peace* without, peace every-way aſſured.

O good JESU, When ſhall I ſtand to behold *thee*? when ſhall I contemplate the glory of thy Kingdom? When wilt *thou* be *all in all* to me?

O when ſhall I be with thee in thy Kingdom, which *thou* haſt prepared for thy beloved from all eternity!

I am left a poor, and baniſhed man, in an Enemy's country; where there are daily warrs, and very great misfortunes.

4. COMFORT my baniſhment, aſſwage my grief; for, my whole deſire aſpires unto *thee*.

And all whatſoever this world offers to me for comfort, is burdenſom to me.

I deſire intimely to enjoy *thee*, but cannot attain unto it.

I would gladly fix my heart on heavenly things; but temporal cares, and immortified paſſions, weigh me down.

In mind I would be above all things; but, I am forced to be ſubject to the fleſh againſt my will.

Thus,

Thus, unhappy man, I fight with my ſelf, and *am become grievous to my ſelf, whilſt my ſpirit ſeeks after things above, and my fleſh after things below.* Rom. 7. & 8.

5. O, WHAT do I ſuffer within! whilſt in mind I conſider heavenly things; and ſuddenly, in my prayers, a multitude of fleſhly fancies preſent themſelves before me.

My God, Be not farr from me; Depart not in thy wrath, from thy ſervant; Caſt forth thy lightning and diſperſe them; Shoot thy darts, and break all the phanſies of the enemy! Pſal. 70.

Grant me grace, ſpeedily to caſt away and contemn the fancies of vices.

Gather my ſenſes together to *thee*, make me forget all worldly things.

Succour me, *everlaſting Truth*, that no vanity may moove me.

Come, *heavenly Sweetneſs*, and let all impurity fly from *thy* face.

Pardon me alſo, and mercifully forgive me, as often as I think on any thing elſe in prayer beſides *thee*.

For, I confeſs truly, that I am wont to be ſubject to many diſtractions.

I am not often times there, where I do bodily ſtand, or ſit; but, rather there where my thoughts do carry me.

There I am, where my thought is; and there oftentimes my thought is, where my affection is.

That quickly coms into my mind which is naturally delightſom, or, through cuſtom, pleaſing.

6. AND for this reaſon; *Thou*, who art *truth it ſelf*, haſt plainly ſaid, *Where thy treaſure is, there alſo thy heart is*, Matt. 6.

It

If I *love* heaven, I willingly think of heavenly things.

If I love the world, I rejoyce at the ſelicity of it, and am ſorry for the adverſity of it.

If I love the fleſh, I oftentimes imagine what is pleaſing to the fleſh.

If I *love* the *ſpirit*, I delight to think of *ſpiritual things*.

For, whatſoever things I love, of them I willingly ſpeak and hear, and carry home with me the images of them.

But, Bleſſed is the man who for thee, O *Lord*, bids farewell to all creatures; who violently reſiſts nature, and through the fervour of *ſpirit*, crucifieth the luſts of the fleſh; that, with a clear conſcience, he may offer pure prayer to *thee*, and be worthy of the company of the Angelical Quires; all earthly things being exteriourly and interiourly ſhut forth.

CHAP. XLIX.

Of the desire of Eternal life, and how great things are promised to them that fight.

1. MY son, When thou perceivest a longing to Eternal bliss to be infused into thee from above, and desirest to depart out of the tabernacle of this body, that thou mayst without any shadow of interchange, contemplate *my light*; open thy heart, and receive this holy inspiration with thy whole affection.

Give thy greatest thanks to the *heavenly goodness*, who deals with thee so favourably, visits thee mercifully, excites thee ardently, lifteth thee up powerfully, lest, through thy own weight, thou fall down to the vanities of the earth.

Neither

Neither doſt thou obtain this by thine own thought and endeavour, but through the onely favour of *heavenly grace*, and divine bounty, that thou mayſt profit in virtue, and greater humility; and prepare thy ſelf to future battels, and endeavour to cleave unto *me* with the whole affection of thy heart, and ſerve *me* with a fervent will.

2. SON, Fire often burns, but flame aſcends not without ſmoke.

In like manner, the deſires of ſome men are earneſtly carried to the deſire of heavenly things; yet, are they not free from temptation of carnal affection; and therefore, it is not altogether purely for the honour of *God*, which they ſo earneſtly requeſt of *him*.

Such is alſo thy deſire, which with much importunity thou repreſenteſt unto *me*.

For,

For, that is not *pure* and perfect, which is infected with ſelf-intereſt.

3. Ask not that which is delightſome, and profitable to *thee*, but that which is grateful and honorable unto *me*.

For, if thou judgeſt rightly, thou oughtſt to prefer and follow my appointment, rather than thine own deſire, or any thing to be deſired.

I know thy deſire, and have heard thy frequent groans.

How thou wouldſt be in the freedom of the glory of the Sons of *God*.

How the celeſtial habitation, and the heavenly country full of joy doth delight thee.

But, the hour is not yet come; for, it is yet another time, a time of war, a time of labour, and tryal.

Thou deſireſt to be ſatisfied with the chiefeſt Good, but thou canſt not attain unto it, for the preſent.

I am it : Expect me (saith our Lord) *till the Kingdom of God come.*

4. THOU art yet to be tryed on earth, and to be exercised in many things.

Comfort shall be sometimes given thee, but full-satiety shall not be granted.

Take courage therefore, and be stout; as well in doing, as in suffering things, contrary to thy nature; thou must become a new man, and be changed to another. *Josh.* 1.

Thou must oftentimes do that which thou wouldst not, and leave undone that which thou wouldst. *Eph.* 4.

That which is pleasing to others, shall go well forward; that which thou desirest henceforth, shall not speed.

That which others say, shall be observed; what thou sayst, shall

not be heeded; others ſhall ask and receive, thou ſhalt ask and not have.

5. OTHERS ſhall be great in the praiſes of men; but, of thee there ſhall be no ſpeech.

To others this, or that, ſhall be committed; but thou ſhalt be accounted fit for nothing.

And hereat nature will ſometimes repine; and it is much, if thou endure it with ſilence.

In theſe and ſuch like things, a faithful ſervant of our Lord is wont to be tryed, how he can deny and overcome himſelf in all things.

There is ſcarce any thing wherein thou haſt ſuch need to mortifie thy ſelf, as in Seeing, and Suffering what is contrary to thy will; eſpecially when that is commanded which ſeems inconvenient to thee and to little purpoſe.

And being placed under authority, thou dareſt not reſiſt a higher power.

It ſeems therefore hard to thee to walk at the beck of another, and leave wholy thine own way.

6. But conſider, Son, that theſe labours ſoon end, and have a reward great above meaſure; and thou wilt receive no grief thereby, but a ſtrong comfort of thy patience.

For, in regard of the little of thy will, which thou now willingly forſak'ſt, thou ſhalt for ever have thy will in heaven.

There indeed, thou ſhalt have all that thou wilt; all that thou canſt deſire.

There indeed, thou ſhalt enjoy all good, without fear of loſing it.

There, thy will ſhall be ever one with *me*, it ſhall deſire nothing ſtrange, or peculial.

There,

There, no man ſhall withſtand thee, no man complain of thee; no man hinder thee; nothing come againſt thee: but all things deſirable ſhall be there together preſent, and delight thy whole deſire, and ſatiate it to the full.

There, *I* will give thee glory for the reproach which thou ſuffered'ſt, a garment of praiſe for grief, for the loweſt place the ſeat of a Kingdom for ever.

There, the fruit of obedience ſhall appear, the labour of pennance rejoyce, and humble ſubjection ſhall be glorioufly crowned.

7. NOW, therefore, bow thy ſelf humbly under the hands of all, and heed not, Who ſaid, or commanded this.

But of this be very careful, that whether thy Prelate, Equal or Inferiour, require any thing of thee, or

or do but insinuate; thou take it all for good, and endeavour to perform it with a sincere intention.

Let one seek this, another that; let one glory in this, another in that, and be praised a thousand-thousand-times; yet, do thou rejoyce neither in this, nor that, but in the contempt of thy self, and in *my* good pleasure and sole honour.

This thou art to wish, That in life and in death, God may be always glorified in thee.

Chap. L.

How a desolate person ought to offer himself into the hands of God.

1. *LORD GOD, Holy Father, be thou now, and for ever blessed, for that, as thou wilt, it is done, and what thou dost is good.*

Let

Let thy ſervant rejoyce in *thee*, not in himſelf, nor any thing elſe; for *thou* alone art true gladneſs.

Thou art my hope, and my crown; *thou* art my joy, and my honour.

O Lord, what hath *thy* ſervant, but what he hath of *thee*, even without any deſert of his?

All is *thine*, whatſoever *thou* haſt given, and whatever *thou* haſt made. 1 *Cor.* 4.

I am poor, and in labours, from my youth; and ſometimes my ſoul is heavy, even to tears, Pſal. 87. and ſometimes is troubled in her ſelf, by reaſon of paſſions which riſe againſt her.

2. I deſire the joy of *peace*; I crave the *peace* of *thy* children, who are fed in the light of *thy* comfort.

If *thou* give *peace*, if *thou* infuſe holy joy, the ſoul of *thy* ſervant ſhall

ſhall be full of ſweetneſs, and devout in *thy praiſe.*

But, if *thou* withdraw *thy* ſelf, as very often *thou* art wont, *he will not be able to run the way of thy commandments*: but rather his knees are bowed to knock his breaſt; for, it is not with him as it was yeſterday, and the day before; when *thy light* ſhined on his head, and he was protected under the ſhadow of *thy* wings, from temptations ruſhing upon him.

3. O righteous *Father*, holy and ever to be praiſed; the hour is come that thy ſervant may be proved.

O *Father*, to be beloved; It is fit, that in this hour, thy ſervant ſuffer ſomething for *thee.*

O *Father*, to be honoured; The hour is come, which from all eternity *thou* didſt foreknow ſhould come, that, for a ſhort time thy ſervant

vant ſhould be exteriourly oppreſſed, but interiourly live with *thee*.

He ſhould be a little deſpiſed, humbled, and made as an abject in the ſight of men, and much afflicted with paſſions, and infirmities; that he may riſe again with thee, in the riſing of new *light*, and be glorified in heaven.

Thou haſt ſo appointed it, *holy Father*, and wilt have it ſo; and this is fulfilled, which *thy ſelf* haſt commanded.

4. FOR, it is a grace to *thy* friend to ſuffer, and be afflicted in this world, for thy love; how often ſoever, and by whomſoever *thou* permitteſt it to be done.

Without *thy* counſel and providence, and without cauſe, nothing is done on earth.

It is good for me, O Lord, that thou haſt humbled me, that I may learn

learn thy juſtifications, and caſt away all haughtineſs of heart and preſumption. *Pſal.* 118.

It is profitable for me that ſhame hath covered my face, that I may rather ſeek to *thee*, than to men for comfort.

I have learned alſo hereby, to dread thy unſearchable judgments, who afflicteſt the juſt with the wicked, but not without equity, and juſtice.

5. I give *thee* thanks, that *thou* haſt not ſpared my ſins, but haſt ſcourged me with ſtripes of *love*-inflicting ſorrows, and cauſing diſtreſſes both within and without.

There is none under heaven, that can comfort me, but *Thou*, my *Lord God*, the heavenly Phyſician of ſouls: *who woundeſt, and healeſt; bringeſt to hell, and draweſt back again.* Tob. 13.

Let

Let thy correction be upon me, and thy rod ſhall inſtruct me. Pſal. 17.

9. BEHOLD, beloved Father, I am in thy hands; I bow my ſelf under the rod of thy correction; let my neck and ſhoulders feel thy ſtripes, that my crookedneſs may be conformed to *thy* Will.

Make me a pious and humble diſciple of *thine*, as *thou* art wont well to do; that I may walk according to thy pleaſure.

I commit my ſelf and all my faults to *thee*, to be corrected.

It is better to be rebuked here, than hereafter.

Thou knoweſt all, and every thing, and there is nothing in the conſcience of man hid from *thee*.

Before things are done, *thou* knoweſt that they will happen, and *thou* haſt no need to be taught, or admoniſhed of thoſe things that are

to

to be done upon earth.

Thou knoweſt what is expedient for my good, and how much tribulation conduceth to the purging the ruſt of ſin.

Do with me according to *thy* deſired good pleaſure, and deſpiſe not my ſinful life: better, and more clearly known to none than to *Thee* alone.

7. GRANT me, *O Lord*, to know what ought to be known; and to *love* what ought to be loved, to praiſe that which is moſt pleaſing to *thee*, to eſteem that which appears precious to *thee*, to deſpiſe that which is contemptible in thy *ſight*.

Suffer me not to judg according to the ſight of the exteriour eye, nor to give ſentence according to the hearing of the ears of ignorant men; but, to determin of *ſpiritual*, and viſible things with a true judgment,

ment, and above all things ever to ſearch after the good pleaſure of *thy Will.*

8. THE ſenſes of men are often deceived in judging.

The lovers of this world alſo are deceived, in loving viſible things only.

What is man the better therefore, becauſe he is reputed greater by man?

The deceitful deceive the deceitful; the vain deceive the vain; the blind the blind; the weak the weak, whilſt he exalts him; and doth truly confound him, whilſt he vainly praiſeth him.

For, how much every one is in *thy* ſight, ſo much he is, and no more, ſaith the humble Saint *Francis.*

CHAP.

CHAP. LI.

That we ought to inſiſt in humble works, when we are not able for high things.

1. SON, Thou art not always able to continue in the fervent deſire of virtue; nor to perſiſt in the high pitch of *contemplation*: but thou muſt ſometimes, of neceſſity, by reaſon of original corruption, deſcend to inferiour things; and bear the burden of this corruptible life, even againſt thy will, and with irkſomneſs.

As long as thou carrieſt this mortal body, thou ſhalt feel trouble, and heavineſs of heart.

Thou oughtſt therefore, in fleſh, often to bewail the burden of fleſh; for that, thou canſt not always perſevere in *ſpiritual* exerciſes, and *divine contemplation.*

2. IT is then expedient for thee to fly to humble, and exteriour works; and to recreate thy ſelf in good actions, to expect with a firm confidence my comming and heavenly viſitation, to bear thy baniſhment patiently, and the dryneſs of thy mind, till thou be viſited again by *me*, and delivered from all anxieties; for, *I* will make thee forget thy pains, and enjoy interior quietneſs.

I will lay open before thee the pleaſant fields of Scripture, *and with a dilated heart thou ſhalt begin to run the way of my commandements:* Pſal. 118. and thou ſhalt ſay, *The ſufferings of this time are not condigne to the future glory, that ſhall be revealed in us.* Rom. 8.

CHAP.

CHAP. LII.

That man must not esteem himself worthy of comfort, but rather guilty of stripes.

1. I AM not worthy, *Lord*, of *thy* comfort, or any *spiritual* visitation.

And thou dealest therefore justly with me, when *thou* leavest me poor, and desolate.

For, if I could shed tears like a Sea, yet were not I worthy of *thy* comfort; therefore I am worthy of nothing but stripes and punishments.

For I have grievously, and often, offended *thee*, and very much sinned in many things.

According therefore to *true* reason, I am not worthy of any comfort.

But thou art clement, and merciful, who wilt not have thy works to periſh, to ſhew the riches of thy goodneſs to veſſels of mercy, and, even beyond all ones own deſert, vouchſafeſt to comfort thy ſervant above humane meaſure.

For thy comforts are not like humane Fables.

2. WHAT have I done, *O Lord*, that thou ſhouldſt impart any heavenly comfort unto me?

I do not remember that I have ever done any good; but have always been prone to ſin, and ſlothful to amendment.

It is true, and I cannot deny it; If I ſhould ſay otherwiſe, *thou* wouldſt ſtand againſt me, and there would be none to defend me.

What have I deſerved for my ſins but hell, and everlaſting fire?

In *truth* I confeſs my ſelf to be worthy

worthy of all ſcorn and contempt; and it is unfit I ſhould dwell among *thy* devout ſervants. *Job.* 9.

And though I am unwilling to hear this, yet notwithſtanding, according to truth, *I will argue my ſins againſt me, that I may better deſerve to obtain thy mercy.* Pſal. 50.

3. WHAT ſhall I ſay being guilty, and worthy of all confuſion? I can utter from my mouth no other word but this only, *I have ſinned, O Lord, I have ſinned; have mercy on me, and pardon me.*

Suffer me a little that I may bewail my grief, before I go unto the land of darkneſs, and be covered with the ſhadow of death. Job. 10.

What doſt thou chiefly require of a guilty miſerable ſinner, but that he be contrite, and ſorrowful, and humble himſelf for his offences?

Hope of forgiveneſs is bred in

true contrition, and humbleneſs of heart.

A troubled conſcience is reconciled, grace loſt is repaired, man defended from future wrath, and *God* and a penitent ſoul meet in the holy kiſs of *peace.*

Humble contrition for ſins is an acceptable ſacrifice to thee, O Lord, ſavouring much more ſweet in thy preſence than burning frankincence. Pſal. 50.

This is alſo the grateful oyntment which thou wouldſt have to be poured upon *thy* feet. *Luke 7.*

For, thou didſt never deſpiſe an humble and contrite heart, Pſal. 50.

There is a place of refuge from the face of the wrath of the enemy.

Whatever uncleanneſs hath been elſewhere contracted, and whatever is defiled is amended, and waſhed away, there.

CHAP.

CHAP. LIII.

That the Grace of God is not given to those that savour of earthly things.

1. SON, *My grace* is precious, it suffers not it self to be mingled with exteriour things, or earthly comforts.

Thou oughtst therefore to cast away all impediments of grace.

If thou desire to receive the infusion thereof, choose a secret place to thy self; love to dwell alone with thy self; desire the conversation of none, but rather pour out devout prayers unto *God*, that thou mayst keep thy mind compunct, and thy conscience *pure*.

Esteem the whole world as nothing.

Prefer the attendance on *God*,

before all other employments.

For thou canſt not attend unto *me*, and delight in tranſitory things.

Thou oughtſt to ſequeſter thy ſelf from thy acquaintants and friends, and keep thy mind deprived of all temporal comforts. *Mat.* 19.

So the bleſſed Apoſtle Saint *Peter* beſeecheth all faithful friends of CHRIST, *To keep themſelves as ſtrangers and pilgrims in this world from carnal deſires, which war againſt the ſoul*, 1 Pet. 2.

2. O how great confidence ſhall he have at the hour of death, who is not detain'd in this world by any worldly affection?

But a weak mind is not yet capable of ſo retired a heart, nor doth a ſenſual man underſtand the *liberty* of an *intern* man.

If notwithſtanding he will be ſpiritual,

ritual, he ought as well to renounce that which is far off, as that which is near him, and to beware of no man more than of himself.

If thou perfectly overcome thy self, thou shalt with more ease subdue all things else.

It is a perfect victory, to triumph over our selves.

For he that keeps himself under in such sort, that his sensuality be subject to reason, and reason in all things obedient to *Me*; he is truly a Conqueror of himself, and Lord of the world.

3. If thou desire to mount unto this height, thou must begin manfully, and set the ax to the root, that thou mayst root out, and destroy thy secret inclination to thy self, and to all private and earthly good.

Upon the inordinate love of a

mans ſelf, depends almoſt all whatſoever is to be wholy overcome in us; and that being once overcome, there will preſently inſue great peace and tranquillity.

But, becauſe few endeavour to die perfectly to themſelves, therefore they remain intangled in themſelves, and cannot he lifted up in *ſpirit* above themſelves.

But he that deſires to walk freely with me, it is neceſſary to mortifie his inordinate and naughty affections, and adhere to no creature with deſire through private love.

CHAP. LIV.

Of the different motions of Grace, and Nature.

1. SON, Obſerve diligently the motions of Nature and Grace, for they move very contrarily and ſubtilly;

ſubtilly; and can hardly be diſtinguiſhed but by him that is *ſpiritual*, and *internally* illuminated.

All men indeed deſire that which is good, and pretend ſome good in their words, or deeds; and therefore under pretence of good, many are deceived.

Nature is crafty and ſeduceth, intangles and deceives many, and alwayes intends her Self for her End.

But, *Grace* walks ſimply, and avoids all ſhew of evil, pretends not deceits, and doth all things *purely* for *God*; in Whom ſhe finally reſts.

2. NATURE will not willingly die, or be kept in, or overcome, or be ſubject, or of her own accord be ſubdued.

But *Grace* labours to mortifie her ſelf, reſiſts ſenſuality, ſeeks to be ſubject, is willing to be overcome,

and

and will not uſe her own liberty.

She loves to be kept under diſcipline, and deſires not to domineer over any; but always to live, remain, and be under *God*; and for *God*, is ready to bow her ſelf humbly under all men.

Nature ſtrives for her own commodity, and conſiders what profit ſhe may reap by another.

But, *Grace* conſiders not what is commodious and profitable to her ſelf, but rather what is profitable to many.

Nature willingly receives honour and reverence: but *Grace* faithfully aſcribes all honour and glory to *God*.

3. NATURE fears ſhame & contempt, but *Grace* rejoyceth to ſuffer reproach for the name of JESUS.

Nature loves idlneſs, and bodily reſt.

reſt and eaſe; but *Grace* cannot be idle, and willingly embraceth labour.

Nature ſeeks to have thoſe things that are curious, and precious, and flies that which is mean and baſe.

But, *Grace* delights in ſimple and humble things, abhorreth not things grievous, nor refuſeth to be clad with old cloaths.

Nature reſpecteth things temporal, rejoyceth at earthly gain, ſorroweth for loſſes, is moved with every little injurious word.

But, *Grace* aſcends to that which is everlaſting, and cleaves not to that which fades with time; nor is troubled with loſs, nor exaſperated with injuries; for ſhe hath placed her treaſure and joy in heaven, where nothing periſheth.

4. NATURE is covetous, & doth more willingly receive than give; ſhe

ſhe loves proper and private things.

But, *Grace* is pitiful and liberal to all, avoids ſingularity, is content with little, and judgeth it *more happy to give than to receive.*

Nature inclines to creatures, to her own fleſh, to vanity, and to diſcourſes.

But, *Grace* draws to *God*, and to virtue; renounceth creatures, flyeth the world, hates the deſires of the fleſh, reſtrains wandring abroad, bluſheth to be ſeen in publick.

Nature is willing to have ſome exteriour comfort wherein ſhe may delight her ſenſes.

But, *Grace* ſeeks comfort in *God* alone, and delights above all viſible things in the chiefeſt Good.

5. NATURE doth all for her own gain and profit; ſhe can do nothing freely, but hopes to gain either that which is equal, or better;

or

or praise, or favour for her good deeds; and covets to have her gifts and works much esteemed.

But, *Grace* seeks no temporal thing, nor asks any other reward for her deserts than *God* alone, nor desires more of temporal necessaries than what may serve her for the obtaining of things *eternal.*

6. NATURE rejoyceth to have many friends and kindred; she glorieth of noble birth and descent; pleaseth the powerful, fawns on the rich, applauds such as are like unto her.

But, *Grace* loves her enemies, is not puffed up, with multitude of friends, nor esteems place or birth, unless it be joyned with great virtue; she rather favours the poor than the rich, hath more compassion of the innocent than potent: rejoyces much in the simple, and respects

reſpects not the deceitful; exhorts the good ever to labour for better gifts, and, through vertue, to be like the *Son of God?*

Nature ſoon complains of want, and trouble; *grace* conſtantly ſuffers want.

7. NATURE turns all things to her ſelf, and contends only for her ſelf:

But, *Grace* reduceth all to God from whence they originally proceed; ſhe aſcribes no good to her ſelf, nor doth ſhe arrogantly preſume of her ſelf; ſhe contends not, nor prefers her own opinion before others, but in every ſenſe and underſtanding ſubmits her ſelf to the eternal wiſdom, and to the *divine judgment.*

Nature covets to know ſecrets, and to hear news, ſhe will appear abroad, and make uſe of many things

things by the Senſes; ſhe deſires to be known, and to do thoſe things for which ſhe may be praiſed, and admired.

But, *Grace* cares not to hear news, nor to underſtand curious matters; for, all this ſprings from the old corruption, ſeeing nothing is new, and durable upon the earth: ſhe teacheth therefore to reſtrain the Senſes, to avoid vain pleaſing, and oſtentation; humbly to hide thoſe things which are worthy of praiſe, and admiration; and from every thing, and every knowledg draweth profitable fruit, and the praiſes, and honour of *God*; ſhe will not have her ſelf, or hers, publickly praiſed; but deſires that *God* may be bleſsed in *his* gifts, *Who* of meer charity beſtows all things.

8. THIS *Grace* is a ſupernatural light,

light, and a certain ſpecial gift of God, and the proper mark of the Elect, and pledg of everlaſting ſalvation, which lifts up a man from earthly baſeneſs, to love heavenly things; and, of a carnal man, makes a ſpiritual perſon.

By ſo much the more, therefore, *nature* is ſuppreſſed and ſubdued, ſo much the greater *grace* is infuſed, and the *intern* man daily by new viſitations more perfected according to the Image of *God*.

CHAP. LV.

Of the corruption of Nature, and efficacy of divine Grace.

1. MY *Lord God*, who haſt created me to thine Image and likeneſs; (*Gen.* 1.) grant me this *grace* which thou haſt ſhewed to be ſo great, and ſo neceſſary to ſalvation,

on, That I may overcome my most wicked nature, which draws to sin, and perdition.

For, I feel in my flesh the law of sin, contradicting the law of my mind, and leading me captive (Rom. 7.) to obey sensuality in many things. Neither can I resist the passions thereof, unless thy holy *grace*, fervently infused into my heart, assists me.

2. THY *grace*, and great *grace*, is necessary that nature may be overcome, which is always prone to evil from her youth.

For, it falling through *Adam* the first man, and being corrupted by sin, the penalty of this stain hath descended upon all mankind. *Gen.* 8.

Nature-it-self, which by *Thee* was created good, and without defect, is now accounted for Vice, and Infirmity of corrupt nature; since the

the motion thereof, left to it self draws to evil and abject things:

For the little ſtrength, which remains; is like a certain ſpark hidden in aſhes.

Then is natural Reaſon it ſelf compaſſed about with darkneſs, retaining yet the power to diſcern betwixt good, and evil; and the difference betwixt true, and falſe: though it be unable to fulfil all it approves, and enjoys not now the full light of *truth*, nor the former integrity of her affections.

3. HENCE it is, my *God*, that according *to my interiour man*, *delight in thy law*, (Rom. 7.) knowing *thy* command to be good, and juſt, and holy, reprooving alſo all evil, and ſhewing that ſin is to be ſhunned.

But in fleſh I ſerve the law of ſin whilſt I rather obey the law of ſenſuality than reaſon. Hence

Hence it is, that I have a will to good, but cannot tell how to do it.

For this reason, I pass many good things; but, because I want grace to help mine infirmity, through a light resistance I go back, and faint.

Hence it happens, that I know the way of perfection, and see clearly enough what I ought to do; but, pressed down with the weight of my own corruption, I rise not unto perfection.

4. O, How very needful, *O Lord*, is *thy grace* to me, to begin any good work, to go forward, and to accomplish it!

For, without *thy grace*, I can do nothing. *Joh.* 15.

But in *thee* I can do all things, when *thy grace* doth strengthen me.

O heavenly grace, without which our

our merits are nothing, or any gifts of nature to be esteemed!

Without *thy grace, O Lord*, arts are nothing worth, beauty nothing, riches nothing, strength nothing, wit nothing, eloquence nothing; for gifts of nature are common to good and evil men.

But, *Grace*, or *divine Love*, is the peculiar gift of the Elect, wherewith being marked, they are esteemed worthy of life everlasting.

This *grace* so much excels, that neither prophecy, nor the working of miracles, nor any speculation how high soever, is any-wise without it to be esteemed: yea, neither faith, nor hope, or other virtues are acceptable to *thee* without *charity* and *grace*. 1 *Cor.* 13.

5. O most blessed *grace*, which makes the poor in spirit rich in virtues, and renders the rich in virtues humble

humble of heart; come descend unto me, repleniſh me in the morning with thy comfort, leſt my ſoul ſhould faint with wearineſs, and dryneſs of mind.

I beſeech *thee, O Lord*, that I may find *grace* in *thy* ſight.

For, *thy grace* is ſufficient for me, though other things be wanting which nature deſires.

If I am tempted and vexed with many tribulations, I will not fear evils, while *thy grace* is with me; ſhe is my ſtrength, ſhe gives advice, and help; ſhe is ſtronger than all enemies, and wiſer than all the wiſe.

She is Miſtreſs of *Truth*, Teacher of diſcipline, light of the heart, ſolace in affliction, baniſher of ſorrow, expeller of fear, nurſe of devotion, and fountain of tears.

What am I without it, but a piece of dry wood, and an unprofitable block to be caſt away?

Let

Let *thy grace* therefore, *O Lord*, alwayes prevent and follow me, and make me ever diligent in good works.

CHAP. LVI.

That we ought to deny our Selves, and imitate Christ by the Cross.

1. SON, As much as thou canst go out of thy self; so much mayst thou enter into *Me*.

As the being void of all desire of external things, makes *inward peace*; so, interiourly forsaking our selves, conjoyns us to *God*.

I will have thee learn the perfect leaving of thy self unto *my* will, without contradiction, or complaint.

Follow me: I am the way, the truth, and the life. John. 14.

With

Without the *Way* there is no Going; without *Truth*, there is no Knowledg; without *Life*, there is no Living.

I am the *Way*, which thou muſt follow; the *Truth*, which thou muſt believe; the *Life*, which thou muſt hope for.

I am the *Way*, which cannot miſlead thee; the *Truth*, which cannot err; the *Life*, which hath no end.

I am a moſt ſtreight *Way*, a moſt ſupream *Truth*; a *true Life*, a bleſſed life, an increated *Life*.

If thou remain in my *way* thou ſhalt know my *Truth*; and *truth* ſhall deliver thee; and thou ſhalt attain to *Life* everlaſting.

2. IF *thou wilt enter into life, keep my commandments* (Luke 9.); *if thou wilt know the truth, believe me; if thou wilt be perfect, ſell all: If thou wilt be my diſciple, deny thy*

ſelf; if thou wilt poſſeſs a bleſſed life, deſpiſe this preſent life, John. 12. Luke 14.

If thou wilt be exalted in heaven, humble thy ſelf in this world.

If thou wilt reign with *me*, bear the Croſs with *me*.

For, The ſervants of the Croſs only, find the way of *true* bliſs, and *true* light.

3. O LORD JESUS CHRIST, for-as-much as thy life is ſtrict, and contemptible to the world, grant me to imitate the contempt of the world with *thee*: *For, the Servant is not greater than his Lord, nor the Diſciple than his Maſter*, Matt. 6.

Let thy Servant be exerciſed in thy holy life, ſince there is my health, and *true* ſanctity: whatever I hear, or read beſides, doth not fully recreate or delight me.

4. SON,

4. SON, Now thou knowſt, and haſt readd all theſe things, happy ſhalt thou be if thou fulfill them.

He that hath my commandments, and keeps them, he it is that loves me; and I will love him, and will manifeſt my ſelf unto him, and will make him ſit with me in the Kingdom of my Father, John 24.

Lord, as thou haſt ſaid therefore, and promiſed; ſo verily let it happen, that I may deſerve it.

I have received a Croſs from *thy* hand; I will bear it till death, as thou haſt laid it upon me.

Truly, The life of a good Monk is a Croſs, but [withal it is a] guide to Paradiſe: it is now begun, it is not lawful to go back, or leave it off.

5. LET us take courage, my brethren, and go forward together; JESUS will be with us.

For the ſake of JESUS, we have taken this Croſs upon us; for JESUS ſake, let us perſevere in it.

He will be our helper, who is our Guide and Fore-runner.

Behold, Our King, who will fight for us, walks before us.

Let us follow him couragiouſly; let us not be diſmayed; but be ready to die with courage in the battel; let us not blemiſh our glory, by flying from the Croſs.

CHAP. LVII.

That man be not too much dejected when he falleth into defects.

1. SON, Patience and Humility in adverſity, are more pleaſing to *me*, than comfort and devotion in proſperity.

What? Art thou grieved for every little

little trifle done, or ſpoke againſt thee? Though it had been much more, thou oughtſt not to have been moved.

But now let it paſs: It is not the firſt, or any new thing; nor will it be the laſt, if thou live long.

Thou art manful enough as-long as no evil, or adverſe thing happens; thou canſt give good counſel alſo, and canſt ſtrengthen others with thy words:

But, when any tribulation ſuddenly knocks at thy door, thou art void of counſel and ſtrength.

Behold thy great frailty, which thou haſt often experienced even on ſmall occaſions.

Yet they are done notwithſtanding for thy good, when theſe, or the like things, befall thee.

2. PUT it out of thy heart, the beſt thou canſt; and, if it touch

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Yet they are done notwithſtanding for thy good, when theſe, or the like things, befall thee.

2. Put it out of thy heart, the beſt thou canſt; and, if it touch

thee, let it not deject thee, or trouble thee; bear it at leaſt patiently, if thou canſt not joyfully.

Though thou art unwilling to hear it, and feel'ſt diſdain; yet repreſs thy ſelf, and ſuffer no inordinate word to paſs out of thy mouth, which may be a ſcandal to the weak.

The ſtorm now raiſed will be quickly allayed; and the interiour grief appeaſed, through the return of *grace*.

I do yet live (ſaith our Lord) ready to help thee, and comfort thee more than before; if thou put thy truſt in *me*, and devoutly call upon *me*.

3. BE more indifferent and quiet in mind, and prepare thy ſelf for greater ſuffering.

All is not loſt, if thou feel thy ſelf often afflicted, or grievouſly tempted;

tempted: thou art a man, not *God*; thou art fleſh, not an Angel.

How canſt thou look to continue ever in the ſame ſtate of virtue, when an Angel in heaven fell, and the firſt man in Paradiſe; both which ſtood not long? *Gen.* 3.

I am He who gives healthful comfort to them that mourn, and do raiſe up to *my divinity* ſuch as know their own frailty.

4. BLESSED *be thy word, O Lord, more ſweet to my mouth than hony and the hony-comb,* Pſal. 118.

What ſhould I do in my ſo great tribulations, and anguiſhes; unleſs thou didſt comfort me with thy holy ſpeeches?

What matter is it, how much, and what, I ſuffer; ſo I may at length attain unto the Haven of ſalvation?

Grant me a good end; grant me a happy paſſage out of this world; Be

mindful of me, my God, and direct me the ſtreight way to thy Kingdom. Amen.

Chap. LVIII.

Of not ſearching into high matters, and the ſecret Judgments of God.

1. SON, Beware thou diſpute not of high matters, nor of the ſecret judgments of *God*; why this man is forſaken, and that man aſſumed to ſo great *grace*: why this man alſo is ſo much afflicted, and that man ſo highly advanced.

Theſe things exceed all humane power, neither can any reaſon or diſcourſe ſearch out the judgment of *God*.

When therefore the enemy ſuggeſts theſe things to thee, or ſome curious people inquire of them, anſwer

ſwer that of the Prophet:

Thou art juſt, O Lord, and thy judgments are right, and that the judgments of the Lord are true, and juſtified in themſelves. Pſal. 118. Pſal. 18.

My judgments are to be feared, not diſcuſſed; for they are incomprehenſible to humane underſtanding.

2. IN like manner do not inquire, or diſpute of the merits of the Saints, which of them is holier than the other, or which is greater in the Kingdom of heaven.

Theſe things oftentimes breed ſtrife, and unprofitable contentions; they nouriſh alſo pride, and vainglory; whence ariſe envy and diſſentions, whilſt one will proudly prefer this Saint, another that.

To deſire to know, and ſearch out ſuch things, is to no purpoſe;

but rather diſpleaſeth the Saints.

For I am not the God of diſſention, but of peace, 1. *Cor.* 14. which peace conſiſts rather in true humility, than in exalting of our ſelves.

3. SOME are carried with zeal of affection to love thoſe, or thoſe moſt; but this is rather humane than divine.

I am *He* who made all the Saints, *I* have given them *grace*, *I* have made them partakers of *my* glory.

I know the merits of every one, *I* have prevented them in the benedictions of *my* ſweetneſs.

I foreknew my beloved, before the beginning of the world; I choſe them out of the world, they choſe not me firſt, Joh. 15.

I called them by *grace*, *I* drew them by mercy, *I* led them through ſundry temptations: *I* have infuſed into them great comforts, *I* have given

given them perſeverance, *I* have crowned their patience.

4. *I* know the firſt and the laſt; *I* imbrace all with ineſtimable *love*; *I* am to be praiſed in all *my* Saints, *I* am to be bleſſed above all things.

I am to be honoured in every one whom I have thus gloriouſly exalted, and predeſtinated, without any of their own precedent merits.

He therefore that contemns one of the leaſt Saints, honours not the greateſt; ſince I have made both the leſs, and the greater. *James* 2. *Sap.* 5.

And he that derogates from any of the Saints, derogates from *me*, and from all the reſt of them in the Kingdom of heaven.

All are One through the band of *charity*; they think the ſame, they will the ſame; and all love one another in One.

5. BUT

5. But yet (which is much more high) they all *love me*, more than themſelves, and their own merits.

For being elevated above themſelves, and drawn out of ſelf-love, they tend wholy to the *love* of *me*, in which they reſt injoyingly.

There is nothing can put them back, nothing preſs them down, from being full of everlaſting *Truth*.

They burn with the unquenchable fire of *charity*.

Let therefore carnal and ſenſual men (who know not how to affect any thing but private joys) forbear to diſpute of the ſtate of the Saints.

They add, and take away, according to their own inclination, not according to the pleaſure of eternal *Truth*.

6. There is ignorance in many, eſpe-

especially in those who are but little enlightned; they seldom *love* any with perfect *spiritual love*; they are yet much drawn with a natural affection, and humane friendship to these, or those; and, as they experience themselves in earthly things, so they imagin of heavenly.

But, there is an incomparable difference, which the imperfect know not, and the illuminated persons discern by revelation from above.

7. BEWARE therefore, my Son, that thou treat not curiosly of these things which exceed thy knowledg; but labour for this, that thou mayst at least have the meanest place in the Kingdom of God. *Eccl.* 7.

And if any did know who were holier than another, or accounted greater in the Kingdom of heaven, What would this knowledg profit him, unless he would thereby humble

ble himſelf more in *my* ſight, and ſtir up his mind to praiſe *my* name with greater fervour?

He who conſiders the greatneſs of his ſins, and the littleneſs of his virtues, and how far he is from the perfection of the Saints, doth that which is more acceptable to *God*, than he that diſputes of their greatneſs or littleneſs.

It is better to pray to the Saints with devotion and tears, and crave their glorious ſuffrages with an humble mind, than to ſearch into their ſecrets with vain inquiry.

8. THEY are well, and right well, contented; if men would content themſelves, and refrain from their vain diſcourſes.

They glory not of their own merits; for they aſcribe no good unto themſelves, but attribute all unto *me*, who of *my infinite char-*

ty beſtowed all upon them.

They are repleniſhed with ſo great *love* of *my Godhead*, and ſuch ſuperaboundant joy, that there is no glory wanting unto them, nor can our happineſs be lacking unto them.

All the Saints how much higher they be in glory, ſo much the more humble they are in themſelves, and nearer, and more beloved by *me*.

And therefore thou haſt it written, that *They did caſt their crowns before God, and fell down upon their faces before the Lamb, and adored him that lives for ever and ever, Amen.* Apoc. 4.

9. MANY inquire, Who is greateſt in the Kingdom of heaven, or *God*; who know not, whether they ſhall be numbred among the leaſt.

It is a great matter to be even the leaſt in heaven where all are great.

For, *All ſhall be called, and be the*

Sons

Sons of God; the leaſt ſhall be as a thouſand; and a ſinner of an hundred years, ſhall dy. Eſa. 65.

For, when the diſciples asked, Who was the greateſt in the Kingdom of heaven, they received this anſwer:

Unleſs ye be converted, and become as children; you ſhall not enter into the Kingdom of heaven. Matt. 18.

Whoſoever therefore ſhall humble himſelf as this little child, he is the greater in the Kingdom of heaven. ibid.

10. Wo be to them that diſdain to humble themſelves willingly with little children; for, the low gate of the Kingdom of heaven will not admit them to enter.

Wo alſo to rich men, who have their comforts; for, whilſt the poor enter into the Kingdom of heaven, they ſhall ſtand waiting without. Luk. 6.

Rejoyce

Rejoyce ye that are humble, and exſult ye that are poor; for that *Yours is the Kingdom of God*, Mat. 5. *yet ſo, as ye walk in truth.*

CHAP. LIX.

That all hope and truſt is to be fixed on God alone.

1. LORD, what is my truſt which I have in this life? or what is the greateſt comfort of all things appearing under heaven? Is it not *thou my Lord God*, whoſe mercies are without number?

Where hath it been well with me without *thee?* or, When could it be ill with me, when *thou* wert preſent?

I had rather be poor for *thee*, than rich without *thee.*

I rather chooſe to be a pilgrim on earth

earth with *thee*, than to poſſeſs heaven without *thee*.

Where *thou* art, there is heaven; and there death, and hell, where *thou* art not.

Thou art my deſire, and therefore I muſt needs ſigh after thee, and cry and pray.

Finally, in none can I truſt, who in time of neceſſity may more ſeaſonably help me than *thee* only, *my God*.

Thou art my hope and truſt, thou art my Comforter, and moſt faithful to me in all things. *Pſal.* 9. *Pſal.* 141.

2. ALL men ſeek their own gain, *thou* only ſeekſt my ſalvation and profit; and turneſt all things to my good. *Philip.* 2.

And though *thou* expoſe me to many temptations and adverſities, yet *thou* ordaineſt all this for my

profit, who art wont to prove *thy* beloved ſervants a thouſand ways; in which proof *thou* oughteſt no leſs to be beloved, and praiſed, than if *thou* didſt repleniſh me with heavenly conſolations.

3. IN *thee* therefore, my *Lord God*, I put all my hope, and refuge; and place all my tribulation and anguiſh.

For, I find all to be infirm and inſtable, whatever I behold out of *thee*.

For, many friends ſhall not avail me, nor ſtrong helpers aid me, nor prudent counſellers give a profitable anſwer, nor the books of the learned comfort, nor any wealth deliver, nor any ſecret place defend, if thou thy ſelf do not aſſiſt, help, ſtrengthen, comfort, inſtruct, and keep us.

4. For,

4. FOR, all things which ſeem to be ordained for the Reſt and felicity of man, when *thou* art abſent, are nothing, and conferr no felicity at all.

Thou therefore art the end of all that is good, and the heighth of life, and the depth of wiſdom; and, the ſtrongeſt comfort of thy ſervants, is to truſt in *thee* above all things.

To *thee*, I lift up mine eyes; in *thee* I confide, my God, Father of mercy.

Bleſs and ſanctifie my ſoul with heavenly bleſſing, that it may be made thy holy habitation, and the ſeat of thy eternal glory; and that nothing may be found in the temple of thy greatneſs, that may offend the eyes of thy Majeſty.

According to the greatneſs of thy goodneſs, and the multitude of thy mercies

mercies, take pity on me, and that the prayer of thy poor ſervant, who is far exiled from thee in the region of the ſhadow of death. Pſal. 50.

Protect and keep the ſoul of thy litle ſervant amidſt ſo many dangers of this corruptible life, and through the aſſiſtance of thy grace, direct him in the way of peace, to the country of everlaſting light. Amen.

The End of the Third Book.

THE

THE FOURTH BOOK OF THE IMITATION OF *CHRIST.*

Of the Sacrament of the Body of Christ.

An Exhortation to the Holy Communion.

The Voice of Christ.

COME *unto me all yee that labour, and are burthend, and I will refresh you*, saith our Lord Mat. 11.

The

That you may eate and drink
at my Table. Luk 22. 30.

The Bread which I will give, is my flesh, for the life of the world. Joh. 6.

Take ye, and eat; This is my Body, that shall be delivered for you. Mat. 26.

This do, in remembrance of me, 1 Cor. 11.

He that eateth my flesh, & drinketh my blood, remains in me, and I in him. John. 6.

The words that I have spoken to you, are spirit, and life. John. 6.

CHAP. I.

With how great Reverence Christ is to be received

The Voyce of the Disciple.

1. THESE, are thy words, ô *Christ*, everlasting *Truth*, though not spoken at one time, nor written in one place.

Since therefore they are *thy* words,

words, they are all to be received by me thankfully, and faithfully.

They are *thine*, and *thou* haſt ſpoken them, for my Salvation.

I willingly receive them from *thy* mouth, that they may be the more cloſely imprinted in my heart.

Theſe devout words full of ſweetneſs, and *love*, do ſtirr me up: but, mine own offences, terrify me; and my impure conſcience keeps me back from receiving ſo great Myſteries.

The ſweetneſs of *thy* words do incourage me, but the multitude of my ſins do oppreſs me.

2. THOU commandſt me to come confidently unto *thee*, if I will have part with *thee*; and to receive the food of immortality, if I deſire to obtain everlaſting life, and glory.

Come (ſayſt *thou* unto me) *all ye that labour, and are burthened, and I will refreſh you*, Mat. 11.

O

O Sweet, and lovely Word in the ear of a ſinner, that *thou* my *Lord God* ſhouldſt invite the poor, and needy. to the communion of *thy moſt bleſſed Body?*

But who am I, *Lord*, that may preſume to approach unto thee?

Behold, the heavens cannot contain *thee*, and *thou* ſay'ſt, *Come ye all unto me.*

3. WHAT means this moſt pious vouchſafing, and ſo loving an invitation?

How ſhall I dare to come, who am conſcious of no good thing, whereon I may preſume?

How ſhall I bring *thee* into my houſe, who have often offended *thy* moſt gracious countenance?

The Angels and Archangels reverence *Thee*, the Saints and Juſt men fear *thee*, and thou ſayſt, *Come ye all unto me.*

Unleſs *thou*, *ô Lord*, didſt ſay it, Who would believe it to be true? and, unleſs thou didſt command it, Who would dare to approach?

4. So *Noah* a juſt man laboured an hundred and more years in building of the Ark, that he with a few might be ſaved (*Gen.* 6.) And how can I in one hour's ſpace prepare my ſelf with reverence to receive the Maker of the world?

Moyſes thy ſervant, *thy* great and ſpecial friend, made an Ark of incorruptible wood, which he alſo covered with moſt pure Gold, to place therein the Tables of the Law. *Exod.* 25: & 26.

And ſhall I, rotten creature, ſo leightly dare to receive the Law-maker, and Giver of life?

Solomon the wiſeſt of the Kings of Iſrael, beſtowed ſeven years in building a magnificent Temple in praiſe

praiſe of *thy* name, 3 *Kings.6.* And celebrated the feaſt of the Dedication thereof eight days together, 3 *Kings.8.*

He offered a thouſand peaceable ſacrifices, and ſolemnly ſet the Ark of the Covenant in the place, prepared for it, with ſound of Trumpet, and Jubile.

And I, the moſt unhappy, and pooreſt of men, how ſhall I bring *thee* into my houſe, who can hardly ſpend one half hour devoutly; and would to *God*, it were once almoſt half an hour, worthily.

5. O My God, How much did they endeavour to do, to pleaſe thee!

Alas! How little it is that I do! How ſhort a time do I ſpend when I prepare my ſelf to receive?

I am ſeldome wholly recollected, very ſeldome altogether free from diſtraction. T 2 And

And yet ſurely, no indecent thought ſhould appear in the wholſome preſence of *thy Deity*, nor any creature buſy me; for, I am not to receive an Angel, but the Lord of Angels for my Gueſt.

6. AND yet there is great difference between the Ark of the Covenant and the Reliques thereof, and *thy* moſt *pure Body* with the unſpeakable virtues thereof: between thoſe legal ſacrifices, figures of future things; and the true ſacrifice of *thy Body*, the compleating of all ancient Sacrifices.

Why do I not therefore become more fervent to enjoy thy venerable preſence?

Why do I not prepare my ſelf with greater care to receive thy ſacred gifts; ſith thoſe holy ancient Patriarchs, and Prophets, yea Kings alſo, and Princes, with the whole people

people have ſhewed ſo great zeal of devotion to thy divine ſervice?

8. THE moſt devout King *David* danced before the Ark of God with all his force, calling to mind the benefits beſtowed in times paſt on the Fathers. 2 *King.*6.

He made Organs of ſundry kinds; he publiſhed Pſalms, and appointed them to be ſung with joy; he himſelf alſo, plaid upon the Harp.

Being inſpired with the grace of the Holy-Ghoſt, he taught the people of Iſrael to praiſe *God* with their whole heart, and with delightful voice every day to bleſs, and praiſe *him.*

If ſo great devotion was then uſed, and ſuch memory of divine praiſe before the Ark of the Teſtament; what reverence and devotion, is now to be performed by me and all Chriſtian people, in the preſence

ſence of this Sacrament, in receiving the moſt excellent *Body* of *Chriſt*?

9. MANY run to ſundry places to viſit the Reliques of the Saints, and are aſtoniſhed when they hear of their miraculous works.

They behold the high buildings of Churches, and kiſs their ſacred bones, wrapped in ſilk and gold.

And behold, *Thou* art here preſent with me on the Altar, my *God*, the *Holy of Holies*; *Creator* of all things, and *Lord* of Angels.

Curioſity, and novelty of things, not ſeen before, do oftentimes draw men to behold ſuch ſights; and little fruit of amendment is reaped thereby, eſpecially, where there is ſuch inconſtant wandring without true contrition.

But here, in the Sacrament of the *Altar*, *Thou art wholly preſent my God, and Man* CHRIST JESUS;

SUS; where plentiful fruit of eternal ſalvation, is alſo reaped; as often as *thou* art worthily, and devoutly received.

And to this not any levity, curioſity, or ſenſuality invites; but, firm *faith*, devout *hope*, and ſincere *charity*.

10. *O God, the inviſible Creator of the world, how wonderfully doſt thou deal with us? how ſweetly and graciouſly doſt thou diſpoſe of thine elect, to whom thou offereſt thy ſelf to be received in the Sacrament! for this exceeds all underſtanding of man.*

This chiefly moves the heart of the devout, and inflames their deſire; ſince *thy true* faithful ſervants, who diſpoſe their whole life to amendment by this moſt worthy Sacrament, oftentimes receive great *grace* of *devotion*, and *love* of virtue.

11. *O admirable and hidden grace of this Sacrament, which the faithful of Christ do only know; but the unfaithful, and such as are slaves to sin, cannot experience.*

In this *Sacrament*, *spiritual grace* is given, and lost virtue restored to the soul; and beauty, disfigured by sin, returns again.

This grace is so great sometimes, that, with the fulness of infused devotion, not only the mind, but the weak body also feels great increase of strength.

12. OUR coldness therefore and negligence, is much to be bewailed and pitied, that we are not drawn to receive Christ with greater affection, in whom consisteth all the merit, and hope of those that are to be saved.

For, He is our sanctification and Redem-

redemption: He is the comfort of paſſengers, and everlaſting enjoyment of the Saints.

It is much therefore to be lamented, that many do ſo little conſider this ſaving Myſtery, which rejoyceth heaven, and conſerves the whole world.

O blindneſs and hardneſs of mans heart, that doth not more deeply weigh ſo unſpeakable a gift; but rather, through daily uſe thereof, comes not to regard it.

13. For, if this moſt holy Sacrament were celebrated in one only place, and conſecrated by one only Prieſt in the world; with how great deſire, doſt thou think, would men be affected to that place, and to ſuch a Prieſt of God, that they might hear the divine myſteries celebrated?

But now there are many Prieſts

made, and *Chriſt* is offered up in many places, that ſo the *grace* and *love* of *God* to man, may appear ſo much the greater, how much the more this ſacred Communion is common throughout the world.

Thanks be to thee, good JESU, *eternal Paſtor, who haſt vouchſafed to refreſh us, poor and baniſhed men, with thy moſt precious Body and Blood: and to invite us to the receiving of theſe myſteries with the words of thine own mouth, ſaying;* "*Come unto me all ye that labour,* "*and are burthened, and I will re-*"*freſh you,* Matt. 11.

CHAP.

CHAP. II.

That the great goodneſs and charity of God is beſtowed on man, in this Sacrament.

The Voice of the Diſciple.

1. *PRESUMING on thy great goodneſs and mercy, O Lord; I being ſick, approach unto my Saviour; hungry and thirſty, to the fountain of life; needy, to the King of heaven; a Servant, to his Lord; a Creature, to his Creator; deſolate, to my pious comforter.*

But, Whence is this to me, that thou comeſt unto me? What am I, that thou ſhouldeſt beſtow on me Thy ſelf? How dare a ſinner appear before thee? and, How doſt thou vouchſafe to come unto a ſinner?

Thou knowſt thy Servant, and ſeeſt

ſeeſt he hath no good in him; why doſt thou this for him?

I confeſs therefore my unworthineſs, and acknowledg *thy goodneſs*.

I praiſe *thy mercy*, and give *thee* thanks for *thy* exceſſive *charity*.

Thou doſt this truly for *thine* own ſake, not my merits; to the end *thy goodneſs* may be better known unto me, *thy charity* more aboundantly ſhewed, and *thy* humility more highly commended.

Since therefore it is *thy* pleaſure, and *thou* haſt commanded that it ſhould be ſo, this *thy* vouchſafing is pleaſing alſo to me, and I do wiſh that my offences may be no hinderance.

2. *O moſt ſweet and benign* JESU, How great reverence and thanks, with perpetual praiſe, is due unto *thee* for the receiving of thy ſacred Body; whoſe dignity no man is found

found able to expreſs?

But what ſhall I think of, in this Communion, in the acceſs to my *Lord*; whom I cannot duly reverence, and yet deſire to receive *him* devoutly?

What can I think of better, and more profitable, than to humble my ſelf intirely before *thee*, and to exalt *thy* goodneſs above me?

I praiſe *thee*, my *God*, and exalt thee for ever.

I deſpiſe my ſelf, and ſubject my ſelf unto *thee*, even unto the depth of my unworthineſs.

3. BEHOLD, *Thou art the Holy of Holies!* and I the ſcum of ſinners!

Behold, *Thou* boweſt *thy ſelf* down unto me, who am not worthy to look up unto *thee*.

Behold, thou com'ſt to me; it is *thy* will, to be with me; *Thou* inviteſt me to thy banquet; *thou* wilt give me

me *thy* heavenly food, and *bread of Angels to eat* (*Pſal.* 77.) no other truly than *thy ſelf, the living bread, that deſcended from heaven, and giveth life to the world*, Joh. 6.

4. BEHOLD, whence *love* proceeds, what a bounty ſhines forth, how great thanks and praiſes are due to *thee* for theſe things?

O, how wholſome and profitable was thy counſel, when *thou* ordainedſt it! how ſweet and pleaſant *thy* banquet, when *thou* gaveſt *thy ſelf* to be our food!

How wonderful *thy* work, O *Lord*; how powerful *thy* virtue; how ineffable *thy Truth!*

For, Thou didſt ſpeak the word, and all things were made, and that was done which thou haſt commanded. Gen. 2. Pſal. 148.

5. IT is a thing wonderful, and worthy

worthy of faith, ſurpaſſing humane underſtanding, that *thou, O my Lord God, true God, and true Man,* art wholy contained under a ſmall form of Bread and Wine; and, without being conſumed, art eaten by the receiver.

Thou (O *Lord* of all things) who haſt need of none, wouldſt dwell in us by the Sacrament.

Preſerve my heart and body unſpotted, that, with a chearful and pure conſcience I may be often able to celebrate *thy* myſteries: That I may receive them to my everlaſting ſalvation, which thou didſt chiefly ordain, and inſtitute for thine honour, and perpetual memory.

6. REIOYCE, my ſoul, and give thanks unto *God* for ſo noble a gift, and ſingular comfort, left unto thee in this valley of tears.

For, as often as thou calleſt to mind

mind this myſtery, and receiveſt the *Body* of *Chriſt*; ſo often thou doſt the work of thy redemption, and art made partaker of all the merits of *Chriſt*.

For, the *charity* of *Chriſt* is never diminiſhed, and the greatneſs of his propitiation is never exhauſted.

Thou oughtſt therefore alwayes to diſpoſe thy ſelf hereunto, by a freſh renewing of mind, and to weigh with attentive conſideration this great myſtery of thy ſalvation.

So great now and joyful it ought to ſeem unto thee, when thou ſayeſt or heareſt *Maſs*, as if the ſame day Chriſt, firſt deſcending into the womb of the *Bleſſed Virgin*, were made *Man*; or, hanging on the Croſs, did ſuffer, and die for the ſalvation of mankind.

CHAP. III.

That it is profitable to Communicate often.

The Voice of the Diſciple.

1. BEHOLD, I come unto thee, O *Lord*, that it may be well with me through *thy* gift, and that I may be delighted in thy holy banquet, *which thou, O Lord, haſt prepared in* thy *ſweetneſs for the poor.* Pſal. 67.

Behold, in *thee* is whatſoever I can, or ought to deſire.

Thou art my ſalvation and redemption, my hope and my ſtrength, my honour and my glory.

Make therefore the ſoul of thy ſervant joyful this day, becauſe, O Lord JESUS, *I have liſted my ſoul unto thee,* Pſal. 85.

I desire now, to receive *thee* devoutly and reverently.

I do long to bring *thee* into my house, that, with *Zacheus*, I may deserve to be blessed by *thee*, and numbred among the children of *Abraham*. Luk. 19.

2. My soul thirsts to receive *thy Body*, my heart aspires to be united with *thee*.

Give thy self to me, and it sufficeth; for, besides *Thee*, no comfort is available.

I cannot be without *thee*, nor live without *thy* visitation.

And therefore I must come often unto *thee*, and receive *thee*, as the only remedy of my health, lest perhaps I faint in the way, if I be deprived of heavenly food.

For, so *thou* didst say (most merciful JESUS) preaching once to the people, and curing sundry diseases,

I will not send them home fasting, lest they faint in the way, Matt. 15.

Deal now in like manner with me, who hast left *thy self* in the Sacrament, for the comfort of *thy* faithful.

For, *Thou* art the most sweet refection of the soul; and he who shall eat *thee* worthily, shall be heir and partaker of everlasting glory.

It is necessary truly for me, who oftentimes fall, and sin so quickly, grow dull, and faint; that, by frequent prayers and confessions, and the holy receiving of *thy Body*, I renew, inflame, and cleanse my self; lest perhaps, by longer abstaining, I fall from my holy purposes.

3. FOR, *the senses of man are prone to evil from his youth* (Gen. 8.) and unless thy *divine Medicine* help him, he quickly slides to worse.

This holy Communion therefore draws

draws back from evil, and ſtrengtheneth in good.

For, if I be now ſo often negligent and tepid when I Communicate and ſay *Maſs*; What ſhould I be, if I did not take this remedy, and ſhould not ſeek ſo great an help?

And, though every day I am not fit, or well diſpoſed to ſay Maſs; yet I will endeavour, at convenient times, to receive the divine myſteries, and make my ſelf partaker of ſo great a grace.

For, This is the only principal comfort of a faithful ſoul, whilſt ſhe is a pilgrim from *thee* in this mortal body; that, being often mindful of her *God*, ſhe may receive her *Beloved* with a devout mind.

4. *O wonderful benignity of thy piety towards us, that thou, O Lord, Creator, and giver of life to all ſpirits, doſt vouchſafe to come unto a poor*

poor ſoul, and with thy whole Godhead and Humanity to repleniſh her hunger.

O happy mind, and bleſſed ſoul, that deſerves to receive *thee*, her *Lord God* devoutly; and, in receiving *thee*, to be filled with *ſpiritual* joy!

O how great a *Lord* doth ſhe entertain! how beloved a Gueſt doth ſhe harbour! how pleaſant a Companion doth ſhe receive! how faithful a Friend doth ſhe accept! how bountiful and noble a Spouſe doth ſhe embrace! who is to be *beloved* alone above all that is to be *beloved*, and all that may be deſired.

Let heaven and earth, and all their beauty, be ſilent in *thy* preſence, my moſt ſweet Beloved; for, whatever beauty, or praiſe they have, proceeds from *thee*, from thy bounteous liberality, and ſhall not equall the beauty of *thy* Name, *of whoſe*

whose wisdom there is no end. Psal. 149.

CHAP. IV.

That many benefits are bestowed on them who Communicate devoutly.

The Voice of the Disciple.

1. O MY LORD GOD, prevent thy servant in the blessings of thy sweetness, that I may deserve to approach worthily and devoutly to thy magnificent Sacrament.

Stir up my heart to *Thee*, and deliver it from grievous heaviness.

Visit me with thy comfort, that I may taste in spirit thy sweetness, Psal. 20. which plentifully lieth hid in this Sacrament, as in the fountain.

Give *light* also to mine eyes, to behold so great a mystery; and strengthen

ſtrengthen me to believe it with undoubted *faith.*

For, it is *thy* work, not mans power; *thy* ſacred inſtitution, not mans invention.

For, man of himſelf is not found able to comprehend and underſtand theſe things, which ſurpaſs even the ſubtilty of Angels.

What ſhall I therefore, unworthy ſinner, earth and aſhes, be able to ſearch, and comprehend of ſo high and ſacred a myſtery?

2. O *Lord*, In ſimplicity of heart, with a good and firm *faith*, and at *thy* commandment, I come unto thee with hope, and reverence; and I do verily believe, that *thou* art here preſent in the Sacrament, *God*, and *Man.*

Thy pleaſure is therefore, that I receive *thee*, and through love unite my ſelf unto *thee.*

Wherefore

Wherefore I run unto *thy* mercy, and beg thee to give me ſpecial *grace*, that I may *wholy melt in thee*, and abound with *love*, and never hereafter admit any other comfort.

For this moſt high and worthy Sacrament, is the health of the ſoul and body; the remedy of all *ſpiritual* ſickneſs; by it, my vices are cured, paſſions bridled, temptations overcome, or leſſened; greater *grace* infuſed; virtue begun, and increaſed; *faith* confirmed, *hope* ſtrengthened, *charity* inflamed, and enlarged.

3. For, *Thou* haſt beſtowed, and ſtill oftentimes doſt beſtow, many benefits in this Sacrament, on *thy Beloved*, who receive it devoutly; my *God*, Receiver of my ſoul, Repairer of humane infirmity, and Giver of all inward comfort.

For, *thou* imparteſt unto them much

much comfort againſt ſundry tribulations, and liſteſt them up from the depth of their own dejection, to the hope of *thy* protection; and doſt *interiourly* recreate, and illuſtrate them with a certain new *grace*, in ſuch ſort, that they who, before Communion, felt themſelves heavy and indiſpoſed, being fed afterwards with this *heavenly Meat* & *Drink*, do find themſelves changed to the better:

Which *thou* ſo freely imparteſt to *thine* Elect, that they may truly acknowledg, and evidently experience that they have nothing of themſelves; and whatſoever *grace* & good they have, it is from *Thee*.

For, of themſelves they are cold, dull, and indevout; but by *thee* they are made fervent, agil, and devout.

For, Who is he that, approaching humbly to the fountain of ſweet-

neſs, that doth not carry away ſome little ſweetneſs?

And who, ſtanding by a great fire, receives not ſome heat thereby?

And *thou* art a fountain always overflowing, and a fire ever burning, and never decaying.

4. WHEREFORE, if I may not draw at the full out of this fountain, or drink my fill, I will notwithſtanding ſet my Lips to the Mouth of this heavenly Conduict; that I may draw from thence ſome ſmall drop to refreſh my thirſt, to the end I wither not wholly.

And, though I cannot be yet ſo heavenly, and inflamed, as a Cherubin or Seraphin, yet I will endeavour to apply my ſelf to devotion, and diſpoſe my ſelf to obtain ſome ſmall ſpark of divine fire, through the humble receiving of this *life-giving Sacrament.* And

And what-ever is wanting to me (Good JESU, moſt holy *Saviour*) do *thou* ſupply for me mercifully, and graciouſly, who haſt vouchſafed to call all unto *thee*, ſaying, *Come unto me all ye that labour and are burthened, and I will refreſh you.* Mat. 11.

5. I TRULY labour in the ſweat of my brows, and am vexed with grief of heart; I am burthened with ſins, and troubled with temptations; I am intangled, and oppreſſed, with many evil paſſions; and there is none to help me, none to deliver and ſave me; but *thou*, my *Lord God*, my *Saviour*, to whom I commit my ſelf and all mine, that thou mayſt keep me, and bring me to life everlaſting.

Receive me to the honour, and glory of *thy name*; who haſt prepared thy *Body*, and Blood, to be my Meat and Drink.

Grant, *Lord God* my *Saviour*, that, through frequenting thy Myſtery, my devotion, and affection to my ſalvation, may increaſe.

CHAP. V.

Of the dignity of the Sacrament, and Prieſtly function.

The Voyce of the Beloved.

1. IF thou hadſt Angelical *purity*, and the ſanctity of Saint *John* the Baptiſt; thou wert not worthy to receive, or handle, this *Sacrament*. *Matt.* 18.

For it is not within the compaſs of the deſerts of man, that man ſhould conſecrate, and handle the Sacrament of *Chriſt*, to the end to receive, for food, the bread of Angels.

A

A great Myſtery; and great is the Dignity of *Prieſts*, To whom is granted that which is not permitted to Angels!

For, *Prieſts* only, rightly ordered, in the Church, have power to celebrate, and conſecrate the *Body* of *Chriſt*.

The *Prieſt* is truly the *Miniſter* of *God*, uſing the words of *God*, by the commandement, and inſtitution of *God*.

But *God* is, there, the principal author, and inviſible worker; to *whom* is ſubject all that *he* pleaſeth, and all that *he* commandeth doth obey.

2. THOU ought'ſt therefore to give more credit to *God Almighty* in this moſt excellent Sacrament, than to thine own ſenſe, or any viſible ſigne.

And therefore thou art to come to this Myſtery with fear, and reverence.

Conſider then attentively, and behold what the Miniſtery is, which is delivered unto thee by the laying on thee, the hands of a *Biſhop*. 1 *Tim.* 2.

Lo; thou art made a *Prieſt*, and conſecrated to ſay *Maſs*, ſee now that faithfully and devoutly, in due time, thou offer ſacrifice unto *God*; and carry thy ſelf ſo, as thou mayſt be without reproof.

Thou haſt not lightned thy burthen, but art now bound in a ſtricter band of diſcipline, and art obliged to a more perfect degree of ſanctity.

A *Prieſt* ought to be adorned with all kind of virtue, and to give example of good life to others.

His converſation ſhould not be according to the popular and common way of men, but with the Angels in heaven, and perfect men on earth.

3. A

3. A *PRIEST*, arrayed in ſacred veſtments, is the Vice-gerent of *Chriſt*; humbly and with a proſtrate mind, to pray unto *God* for himſelf and all the people.

He hath before and behind the ſigne of the *Croſs* of our *Lord*, to the end he may remember the *Paſſion* of *Chriſt*.

He bears the *Croſs* before him in the veſtment, that he may diligently behold the footſteps of *Chriſt*, and fervently endeavour to follow them.

He is marked with the *Croſs* behind, that he may patiently ſuffer for *God*; whatſoever adverſities ſhall be laid on him by others.

He bears the *Croſs* before him, that he may lament his own ſins; and the ſame behind, that he may with a compaſſionate heart bewail the offences of others, and know

that he is placed as a Mediator betwixt *God*, and Sinner.

Neither ought he to ceaſe from prayer, and holy oblation, till he deſerve to obtain *grace* and *mercy*.

When a *Prieſt* doth celebrate, he honoureth God, rejoyceth the Angels, edifieth the Church, helps the living, gives reſt to the dead, and makes himſelf partaker of good works.

CHAP. VI.

An Interrogation of the exerciſe before Communion.

The Voyce of the Deiſciple.

1. WHEN I weigh *thy* greatneſs, ô *Lord*, and my unworthineſs; I tremble very much, and am confounded in my ſelf.

For,

For, If I come not to *thee*, I fly from life; and, if I intrude my ſelf unworthily, I incurr *thy* diſpleaſure.

What therefore ſhall I do, my *God*, my Helper, my Counſellor in neceſſities?

2. Do *thou* teach me the right *way*; appoint me ſome exerciſe ſutable to this ſacred Communion.

For it is profitable for me to know how I ſhould reverently, and devoutly prepare my heart unto *thee*; for, the healthful receiving thy *Sacrament*, or, for celebrating ſo great, and divine a *Sacrifice*.

CHAP. VII.

Of the diſcuſſion of our own conſcience, and purpoſe of amendment.

The Voice of the Beloved.

1. ABOVE all things, the *Prieſt* of *God* ought to come to celebrate, handle, and receive this *Sacrament* with great *humility* of heart, and lowly reverence; with a full *faith*, and pious intention, to the honour of *God*.

Examine diligently thy conſcience, and, to thy power, purge, and cleanſe it with *true contrition*, and humble confeſſion.

So as there may be nothing in thee that thou canſt diſcern, which may breed remorſe or hinder thy free acceſs.

Repent thee of all thy ſins in general,

neral; and, in particular, bewail, and grieve for thy daily offences.

And, if thou haſt time, confeſs to *God*, in the ſecret of thy heart, all the miſeries of thy paſſions.

2. LAMENT, and grieve, that thou art yet ſo carnal, and worldly; ſo immortified in thy paſſions; ſo full of the motions of concupiſcence.

So ill governed in thy exterior ſenſes!

So often intangled with vain phanſies:

So much inclined to exteriour things, ſo negligent in thy *interior*; ſo prone to laughter, and diſſolution, ſo hard to tears and compunction:

So prone to eaſe, and pleaſures of the fleſh; ſo dull to auſterity, and fervour; ſo curious to hear news, and ſee fine ſights:

So

So ſlack to embrace that which tends to thy humiliation, and contempt:

So covetous of abundance:

So niggardly in giving:

So faſt in keeping:

So inconſiderate in ſpeech:

So unable to keep ſilence:

So incompoſed in manners!

So importune in actions:

So greedy to meat:

So deaf to the word of *God*:

So haſty to reſt, ſo ſlow to labour:

So watchful to tales:

So drowſy to watch in the ſervice of *God*:

So haſty to make an end:

So wandring in attention:

So negligent in ſaying the office:

So teprid in ſaying the Maſs:

So dry in receiving:

So quickly diſtracted:

So ſeldome well recollected;

So

So ſuddenly moved to anger:
So apt to take diſpleaſures againſt another:
So prone to judg:
So ſevere to reprehend:
So joyful in proſperity, ſo weak in adverſity:
So often propoſing much good, and performing little.

3. THESE, and other thy defects, confeſſed and bewailed with ſorrow and great diſlike of thine own infirmity; make a firm purpoſe to amend thy life, and profit more.

Then, with full reſignation, and with thy whole will, offer thy ſelf up to the honour of *my* name, a perpetual ſacrifice on the Altar of thy heart; faithfully committing thy ſoul, and body unto *me*.

That thou mayſt ſo deſerve worthily to come to offer ſacrifice unto *God*, & receive, availably to thy ſalvation,

vation, the Sacrament of *my Body*.

4. FOR, there is no oblation more worthy, nor satisfaction greater for the washing away of sins, than to offer up ones self *purely* unto *God*, and wholly, with the oblation of the *Body* of *Christ* in the Mass, and in Communion.

If a man shall do what lyeth in him, and be truly penitent, as often as he shall come unto *me* for grace and pardon; *I live* (saith our Lord) *who will not the death of sinner, but rather that he may be converted and live*: for, *I will not remember his sins any more, but all shall be forgiven him*, Ezek. 18.

CHAP.

CHAP. VIII.

Of the Oblation of Christ on the Cross, and resignation of our Selves.

The Voice of the Beloved.

1. AS I *willingly offered my self to God, my Father with my hands stretched out on the Cross, and my Body naked for thy sins; so as nothing remained in me, that was not turned into a sacrifice for the appeasing the divine wrath.* Esay. 51. Heb. 9:

Even so, must thou offer thy self willingly unto *Me*, in a *pure*, and *holy oblation* dayly in the *Mass*, with all thy strength, and affections, as heartily as thou art able.

What do *I* more require of thee, than that thou endeavour to resigne thy self wholly to *me*!

I reſpect not whatever thou giveſt, beſides thy ſelf; for, *I* ſeek not thy *gift*, but *Thee*. *Prov.* 23.

2. AS it would not ſuffice thee, if thou hadſt all but *me*; ſo it cannot pleaſe *me*, give what thou wilt beſides thy ſelf.

Offer thy ſelf to *me*, and give thy ſelf wholy to *God*, and thy offering will be accepted.

Behold, *I* offered my ſelf wholy to *my Father* for thee, and gave my whole *Body*, and *Blood* for thy food; that *I* might be wholy thine, and thou remain mine.

But if thou abid'ſt in thy ſelf, and doſt not offer thy ſelf freely to *my* will, thy oblation is not intire, neither ſhall the union betwixt us be perfect.

A free offering of thy ſelf, therefore, into the hands of *God*, muſt go before all thy actions, if thou wilt

wilt obtain freedome, and *grace.*

And, for this reaſon, few are *illuminated* and made *interiourly free, becauſe they do not reſolve to deny themſelves wholly.*

My ſaying is undoubtedly *true;* "*Unleſs one forſake all, he cannot be my Diſciple.* Luc. 14.

If therefore thou wiſheſt to be *my* Diſciple, offer up thy ſelf to *me,* with all thy deſires.

CHAP. IX.

That we muſt offer our Selves and all that is ours to God; and pray for all.

The Voice of the Diſciple.

1. THINE, ô *Lord, are all things that are in heaven, and in earth.* Pſal. 23.

I desire to offer my self unto *thee* as a free oblation, and to remain always *thine*.

In *Simplicity* of heart, ô *Lord*, I offer my self unto *thee* this day to be *thy* servant for ever; to serve thee, and in a sacrifice of perpetual praise.

Receive me with this holy Oblation of thy precious Body, which in the presence of invisible Angels attending, I offer unto thee this day, that it may be for mine and all the peoples salvation.

2. I OFFER unto *thee*, ô *Lord*, all my sins, and offences, which I have committed in the sight of *thee*, and thy holy Angels, from the day wherein I could first sin, to this day, upon thy Altar of reconciliation; that *thou* mayst consume, and burn them all with the fire of *thy charity*; and wash out all the stains of my

sins,

ſins, and cleanſe my conſcience from all offences, and reſtore unto me *thy grace* which through ſin I loſt, forgiving me all fully, and receiving me mercifully in the kiſs of *peace.*

3. WHAT can I do for my ſins, but humbly confeſs, and bewail them, and beg always for mercy? I beſeech thee, hear me in thine abundant mercy, where I ſtand before thee, my *God!*

All my ſins moſt highly diſpleaſe me; I will never commit them again, but am ſorry, and will be ſorry for them as long as I live, and am ready to do penance, and ſatisfy for them to the utmoſt of my power.

Forgive me, ô *God*, forgive me my ſins, for thy holy name ſake; ſave my ſoul, which thou haſt redeemed with thy moſt precious Blood.

Behold, I commit my ſelf to *thy* mercy,

mercy, I reſigne my ſelf into *thine* hands; do with me, according to *thy* goodneſs, not according to my malice, and iniquity.

4. I OFFER unto *thee*, all my good works, though they be very few and imperfect; that *thou* mayſt amend and ſanctify them, that *thou* mayſt make them grateful, and acceptable to *thee*; and mayſt always perfect them more, and more; and likewiſe bring me, ſlothful and unprofitable creature, to a bleſſed, and happy end.

5. I OFFER unto *thee* alſo the holy Vows of devout perſons; the neceſſities of my parents, friends, brethren, ſiſters, and all thoſe who are dear unto me, and that have done good either to my ſelf or others, for *thy* love; and begged, and deſired me to ſay *Maſs*, and pray

pray for them, and all theirs; whether they be yet alive, or already dead, that they may all receive the help of *thy grace*, and benefit of comfort, protection from dangers, delivery from pains; that, freed from all evils, they may joyfully, give worthy thanks to *thee*.

6. I OFFER up alſo unto *thee*, my prayers, and ſacrifice of reconciliation, for them eſpecially who have in any thing wronged, grieved, or ſlandered me, or have done me any damage, or diſpleaſure.

And for all thoſe whom I have, at any time, grieved, troubled, or ſcandalized, by works, or deeds, knowingly or ignorantly; that it may pleaſe thee to forgive us all our ſins, and mutual offences.

Take away, ô *Lord*, from our hearts al jealouſy, indignation, wrath and contention, and whatſoever may

may hurt charity, and weaken brotherly love.

Have mercy, ô *Lord*, have mercy on thoſe who crave mercy; give grace to them that ſtand in need thereof; and grant that we may be ſuch as we may be worthy to enjoy thy grace and attain to *life everlaſting*.

CHAP. X.

That the holy Communion is not lightly to be forborn.

The Voyce of the Beloved.

1. THou oughtſt to have recourſe often to the fountain of *grace*, and divine mercy; to the fountain of *goodneſs* and all *purity*; that thou mayſt be cured of thy ſins, and paſſions, and deſerve to be made more ſtrong and vigilant a-

gain

gainſt the deceipts, and temptations of the Devil.

The Enemy, knowing the greateſt profit, and remedy, to conſiſt in the holy *communion*; endeavours by all means, and occaſions that poſſibly he can, to withdraw and hinder faithful, and devout perſons from it.

2. For, ſome, when they diſpoſe themſelves to the *ſacred Communion*, ſuffer great aſſaults of the devil.

For, that wicked Spirit, as it is written (in *Job.* 1.) commeth among the ſons of *God*, to trouble them with his accuſtomed malice, or to make them over-fearful, and perplexed, that ſo he may diminiſh their affection; or, by reſiſting them, take away their faith to the end they may altogether abſtain from this *Communion*, or, at leaſt, frequent it with leſs devotion. But,

But, there is no heed to be taken to his frauds, and fancies, though they are never ſo foul and horrid; but all his fancies are to be returned back on his own head.

He is (miſerable wretch) to be contemned and ſcorned; and the *ſacred communion* is not to be omitted, for the commotions and aſſaults which he raiſeth.

3. OFTENTIMES, much ſollicitude to obtain devotion, and a certain anxiety to make our confeſſion, hinders us.

Do according to the counſel of the prudent man, and put away all anxiety, and ſcruple; for it hindreth the *grace* of *God*, aud deſtroys devotion of mind.

Leave not the Communion for a ſmall diſquiet or vexation, but go confeſs ſooner, and willingly forgive others what offences ſoever they have

have committed againſt thee; and, if thou haſt offended any, humbly beg pardon, and *God* will willingly forgive thee.

4. WHAT avails it, to delay Confeſſion a long time, or to deferr the holy *Communion?* Purge thy ſelf with ſpeed, ſpit out the venom preſently, make haſte to take a remedy, and thou ſhalt find it better than if thou didſt long time deferre it.

If thou omit to day for this cauſe, to morrow perhaps a greater will fall out; and ſo thou mayſt be hindred a long time from *Communion*, and become more unfit.

Stir up thy ſelf, and ſhake off all heavineſs and ſloth with the greateſt force, and ſpeed thou canſt; for, it profits nothing, to continue long in unquietneſs and trouble of mind, and to withdraw thy ſelf from the

Sacrrments, for daily imperfections.

Yea it very much endamages, to deferre Communion long; for, it is wont to breed a grievous dulneſs.

Alas! ſome cold and diſſolute people do willingly delay their Confeſſion; and do therefore deſire to deferre the *ſacred Communion*, leſt they ſhould be bound to a greater watch over themſelves.

5. ALAS! How little is their *love*, and how weak their devotion, who ſo eaſily put-by the *ſacred Communion*!

How happy is he, and grateful to *God*, who ſo ordereth his life, and keeps his conſcience in ſuch *purity*; that he may be ready, and affected to Communicate every day, if it were lawful for him, and it might be done without note?

If ſometimes any abſtain, for *humility*-ſake, or by reaſon of ſome lawful

lawful impediment, he is to be commended for his reverence.

But, if ſloath be the cauſe, he muſt ſtirr himſelf up, and do what lyeth in him, and *God* will further his deſire for his good will, which *God* doth chiefly regard.

6. AND, when he is lawfully hindered, he ſhall always have a good will and pious inclination to communicate, and thereby he ſhall not want the fruit of the Sacrament.

For, any devout perſon may every day and hour profitably, and without lett, receive *Chriſt ſpiritually.*

And yet, on certain days, and at the time appointed, he ought to receive Sacramentally (with affection and reverence) the *Body of Chriſt his Redeemer*, and rather ſeek the honour and glory of *God*, than his own comfort.

For, he communicates myſtically, and is inviſibly fed as often as he devoutly calls to mind the myſtery of the *Incarnation*, and *Paſſion of Chriſt*, and is inflamed with *his love*.

7. He that prepares not himſelf, but when a Feaſt draws near, or when Cuſtome compels him, ſhall be often unprepared.

Bleſſed is he who offers himſelf up as an *Holocauſt* to our *Lord*, as often as he doth celebrate or communicate.

Be not too long, or too ſhort in ſaying *Maſs*; but obſerve the good common manner of thoſe with whom thou liveſt.

Thou oughteſt not to be tedious, or troubleſome to others, but keep the common courſe according to the inſtitution of Superiours; and rather frame thy ſelf to the profit

of others, than to thiue own private devotion, or affection.

CHAP. XI.

That the Body of Christ, and the holy Scripture, are most necessary to a faithful soul.

The Voice of the Disciple.

1. O MOST sweet *Lord* JESUS, how great is the delight of a devout soul, that feasts with *thee* in *thy* Banquet, where there is no other meat offered to be eaten, but *thy Self, her only Beloved*, and most to be desired above all the desires of her heart.

And truly, it would be delightful to me to pour out tears with an *intime* affection in thy presence, and, with *devout Magdalene*, to wash thy feet with tears. *Luk. 7.*

But where is this devotion, where is ſo plentiful ſhedding of tears?

Certainly, in the ſight of *thee* and *thy* holy Angels, my whole heart ſhould be inflamed, and diſſolve into tears for joy; ſince I enjoy *thee* in the Sacrament, *truly* preſent, though hidden under another form.

2. FOR, To behold *thee in thine own divine brightneſs*, mine eyes would not be able to endure it, neither could the whole world ſubſiſt in the *clear glory of thy Majeſty*.

In this therefore thou provideſt for my weakneſs, that *thou hideſt thy ſelf* under the Sacrament.

I *truly* have, and adore, him whom the Angels adore in heaven; but I for the preſent time, in *faith*; they in *his* proper form without ſhadow.

I muſt be content with the light

of *true faith*, and walk therein till the day of everlasting brightness break, and the shadows of figure pass away.

But, when that shall come that is perfect, the use of Sacraments shall cease. 2 Cor. 13.

For, the Blessed in the heavenly glory need not the remedy of Sacraments; but rejoyce without end in the presence of *God*, beholding his glory face-to-face; and, being transformed, through the light of glory, into the light of the *Abyssal Deity*, they tast the *Word* of *God made flesh*, as he was from the beginning, and as he remains for ever.

3. MINDFUL of these wonderful things, even all *spiritual* comfort becoms tedious unto me; for, as long as I behold not my *Lord* openly in *his* glory, I make no account

of whatſoever I hear, or ſee in this life.

Thou art my witneſs, O God, that nothing can comfort me, nor any creature give me reſt; but *thou*, my *God*, *whom* I deſire eternally to contemplate.

But this is not poſſible, while I remain in this mortal life.

I muſt therefore frame my ſelf to much patience, and ſubmit my ſelf to *thee*, in all my deſires.

For, thy Saints alſo, who now rejoyce with *thee*, O Lord, in the Kingdom of heaven, whilſt they lived, expected in faith, and great patience, the Coming of *thy* Glory.

What they believed, I believe; what they hoped for, I hope for; to the place they are already arrived, I truſt I ſhall arrive through *thy grace*.

In the mean time, I will go for-

ward in *faith*, ſtrengthened by the example of thy Saints.

I have moreover holy books for my comfort, and guide of my life; and above all theſe *thy* moſt *ſacred Body*, for a ſingular remedy and refuge.

4. Two things indeed I perceive very neceſſary for me in this life, without which this miſerable life would be inſupportable to me.

During the ſpace of my impriſonment in this Body, I acknowledge my ſelf to ſtand in need of two things (*viz.*) *Food*, and *Light*.

Thou haſt therefore given unto me, weak creature, *thy ſacred Body* for the food of my ſoul and body, (*Joh.* 6.) and *haſt ſet thy word as a light unto my feet*.

Without theſe two, I cannot well live; for, the *Word of* God *is the*

light of my ſoul, and thy Sacrament the bread of life.

Theſe may be called two Tables alſo, ſet on the one ſide, and the other, in the Store-houſe of the *Holy Church.*

One is the Table of *thy holy Altar*, containing the *ſacred Bread*, that is, *the precious Body of Chriſt:*

The other is of divine Law, containing holy Doctrine, teaching the *true Faith*, and leading certainly to the part of the *Temple within the Vail, where the Holy of Holies are.*

Thanks be to *thee, O Lord* JESUS, *light of everlaſting light*, for the Table of holy doctrin, at which *thou* ſerveſt us by *thy ſervants* the Prophets, and Apoſtles, and other Doctors.

5. THANKS be to *thee, Creator*, and *Redeemer* of man, who to manifeſt *thy* love to the whole world, haſt

haſt prepared a great Supper, in which not the typical Lamb, but *thine own moſt ſacred Body* and *Blood* is offered to be eaten; rejoycing all the *faithful* with *thy ſacred Banquet*, and inebriating them with the Cup of *Salvation*, in which are all heavenly delights: and the holy Angels do feaſt with us, but with a more happy ſweetneſs.

6. O, how great and honourable is the office of *Prieſthood*; to whom is granted, with ſacred words, to conſecrate the *Lord* of *Majeſty*, with their lips to bleſs *him*, with their hands to hold *him*, with their own mouth to receive *him*, and to adminiſter him to others.

O how clean ought thoſe hands to be! how pure that mouth! how holy the body! how unſpotted the heart of the Prieſt, into whom the Author of purity ſo often enters!

Nothing

Nothing but holy, no word but chaſt and profitable, ought to proceed from the mouth of the *Prieſt*, who ſo often receives the *Sacrament* of *Chriſt*.

7. SIMPLE and chaſt ought his eyes to be, which are wont to behold the *Body of Chriſt*.

The hands pure, and lifted up to heaven, that uſe to handle the Creator of heaven and earth.

Unto *Prieſts* it is eſpecially ſaid in the Law, *Be you holy, for that I your Lord God am holy*, Lev. 19,20.

8. LET *thy grace*, *Almighty God*, aſſiſt us, that we who have undertaken the office of *Prieſthood*, may ſerve *thee* worthily and devoutly, in all purity with a good conſcience.

And, though we cannot live in ſo great innocency, as we ought to do;

do; grant us, notwithſtanding, in due manner to bewail the ſins which we have committed, and in the ſpirit of *humility*, and a good will, to ſerve *thee* hereafter, with more fervour.

Chap. XII.

That he who is to Communicate, ought to prepare himſelf with great diligence, for Chriſt.

The Voyce of the Beloved.

1. I Am the *lover* of *purity*, and giver of ſanctity; *I* ſeek a *pure* heart and *there* is *my* reſting place.

Make ready a great Chamber adorn'd, and I will make with thee my Paſch with my Diſciples. Mark. 14. Luke. 22.

If

If thou wilt have *me* come unto thee, and remain with thee, purge the old leaven, and make clean the dwelling of thy heart; ſhutt out the whole world, and all tumults of Vices.

Sit like a Sprrow ſolitary on the houſe top, and think of thy exceſſes in the bitterneſs of thy ſoul.

For every lover prepares the beſt, and faireſt room, for his *beloved*; and thereby, is known the affection of him that entertains his beloved.

2. KNOW thou notwithſtanding, that the worth of no action of thine, is able to make this preparation ſufficient, though thou ſhouldſt prepare thy ſelf a whole year together, and ſhouldſt think of nothing elſe.

But, of my *mercy* and *grace* only, thou art ſuffered to come to my *Table*, like a beggar invited to dinner to a rich man; who hath no thing

thing elſe to return him for his benefits, but to humble himſelf and give him thanks.

Do what lies in thee, and do it diligently; not for cuſtome, not for neceſſity: but, with fear, and reverence, and affection, receive the *Body of thy beloved Lord God*, who vouchſafeth to come to thee.

I am he that hath called thee, *I* have commanded it to be done; *I* will ſupply what is wanting in thee, Come, and Receive *me*.

3. WHEN I beſtow the grace of devotion on thee, give thanks to God; not, becauſe thou art worthy, but becauſe *I* have had mercy on thee.

If thou have it not, but rather feelſt thy ſelf dry; continue in Prayer, ſigh, and knock, and give not over till thou deſerve to receive ſome crum, or drop, of ſaving *grace*.

Thou

Thou haſt need of *me*, not *I* of thee nor doſt thou come to ſanctify *me*, but *I* come to ſanctify thee, and make thee better.

Thou com'ſt that thou mayſt be ſanctified by *me*, and united to *me*; that thou mayſt receive new grace, and be ſtir'd up anew to amendment.

Do not neglect this *grace*; ever prepare thine heart with all diligence; and receive thy *beloved* into thy ſoul.

4. AND thou muſt not only prepare thy ſelf to devotion before *Communion*, but carefully alſo keep thy ſelf therein, after thou haſt received the *Sacrament*.

For, a careful guard of thy ſelf after, is no leſs exacted than devout preparation before; ſince a good guard after, is the beſt preparation again, for the obtaining of greater grace.

For

For one becoms very much indiſpoſed thereby, if he be preſently too much poured forth to exterior comforts.

Beware of much talk; remain in ſome ſecret place, and injoy thy *God*; ſince thou haſt him, whom all the world cannot take from thee.

I am He, to whom thou oughtſt to give thy ſelf wholy, that thou mayſt hereafter live, not in thy ſelf but in me without all ſollicitude.

CHAP. XIII.

That a devout ſoul ought to deſire with all her heart to be united with Chriſt in the Sacrament.

The Voyce of the Diſciple.

1. WHO will grant me this, O *Lord*? that I may find thee

thee alone, and open my whole heart unto thee, and injoy thee as my ſoul deſires; and that no man may now look upon me, or any creature moove or reſpect me; but *Thou* alone mayſt ſpeak unto me, and I unto *Thee*, as the *beloved* is wont to ſpeak to the *beloved*, and a friend to banquet with his friend.

This I pray for, this I deſire, That I may be wholy united to *thee*, and may withdraw my heart from all created things, and more and more, by ſacred communion, and often celebrating, learn to taſte of heavenly, and everlaſting things.

Ah my *God*! When ſhall I be wholy united and abſorpt by *thee*, and altogether forgetful of my Self?

Thou in me, and I in *thee*; and ſo grant us both to continue in one!

2. *THOU art truly my beloved choſen among'ſt thouſands; in Whom my ſoul*

ſoul hath taken pleaſure to dwell all the days of her life. Cant. 5.

Thou art truly my *Pacifier*, in whom is the greateſt *peace* and true *reſt*; without whom, is labour, and ſorrow, and infinite miſery.

Thou art truly a hidden God, and thy counſel is not with the wicked; for, thy converſation is with the humble, and ſimple. *Eſay.* 45. *Prov.* 5.

O, How ſweet is *thy Spirit*, *O Lord!* who to the end thou might'ſt ſhew thy ſweetneſs towards thy children, vouchſafeſt to feed them with the moſt *ſweet bread* which deſcends from heaven. *Soph.* 12.

There is ſurely no other nation ſo great, which hath *God* approaching unto it, as *thou*, O *God*, art preſent to all *thy* faithful; to whom, for their dayly comfort, and for the lifting up of their hearts unto heaven, *thou* giveſt *thy* ſelf to be eaten,

eaten, and injoyed. *Deut.* 14.

3. FOR, What other nation is there ſo famous as the Chriſtian people? or, What creature under heaven ſo *beloved* as a devout ſoul; into whom *God* enters, that *he* may feed her with *his glorious fleſh*?

O ineffable grace! O admirable favour! O infinite *love*! ſingularly beſtowed upon man!

But, What ſhall I give unto our Lord, in return of this grace for ſo high a charity! Pſal. 115.

There is nothing more grateful that I am able to give, than to beſtow my *Heart* intirely on my *God*, and to unite it intimely to *him*.

Then ſhall all my interiour rejoyce, when my ſoul ſhall be perfectly united unto God!

Then *he* will ſay unto me, If thou wilt be with *me*, I will be with thee.

And I will anſwer *Him*, *Vouchſafe*,

O Lord, to remain with me, and I will willingly be with thee.

This is my whole deſire, that my heart may be united to *thee.*

CHAP. XIV.

Of the fervent deſire of ſome devout perſons to the Body of Chriſt.

The Voyce of the Diſciple.

1. O HOW *great is the ſtore of thy ſweetneſs, O Lord; which thou haſt hidden for thoſe who fear thee!* Pſal. 50.

When I remember ſome devout perſons, who come unto *thy Sacrament, O Lord,* with very great devotion, and affection; I am then often confounded with my ſelf, and bluſh becauſe I come ſo tepidly, and coldly to *thy Altar,* and to *thy* Table of *holy Communion.*

Becauſe

Because I remain so dry and without affection of heart, that I am not wholy inflamed in the presence of thee my *God*: nor so earnestly drawn, and moved, as many devout persons have been; who, out of vehement desire of *Communion*, and a feeling *love* of heart, could not withhold themselves from weeping; but with desire both of soul and body, they even from the very bottom of the heart longed after *thee*, O *God*, the living fountain; being not otherwise able to temper or satiate their hunger, but by receiving thy Body with all joy and spiritual greediness.

2. O *true ardent Faith* of theirs, being a probable argument of *thy* sacred Presence!

For, those truly know their own Lord in the breaking of bread, whose hearts so vehemently burn within them

them whilſt JESUS *walks with them.* Luk. 24.

Such deſire and devotion, ſuch vehement love, is oftentimes far from me.

Be propitious unto me (*good, ſweet, and benign* JESU) and grant thy poor beggar may, at leaſt ſometimes, feel, in the ſacred *Communion*, a little cordial deſire of *thy love*, that my *faith* may be more ſtrengthened, *hope in thy goodneſs* increaſed, and *charity* once perfectly inflamed; and, taſting heavenly *Manna*, may never decay.

3. THY mercy nevertheleſs is able to give me even the *grace* I deſire, and to viſit me in *thy* bounteous clemency with the *ſpirit* of fervour when it ſhall pleaſe *thee.*

For though I burn not with ſo great a deſire as thoſe who are ſo ſpecially devoted to *thee*; yet not-

withſtanding, through *thy grace*, I deſire to have this great inflamed Deſire; praying, and craving that I may participate with all ſuch *thy* fervent *lovers*, and be numbred amongſt them in their holy company.

CHAP. XV.

That the grace of devotion is obtained by humility, and denyal of our ſelves.

The Voice of the Beloved.

1. THOU oughtſt to ſeek the *grace* of devotion inſtantly, to ask it earneſtly, to expect it patiently, and confidently; to receive it thankfully, to keep it humbly, to work with it dilligently; and to permit the time, and manner, of the ſupernatural viſitation to *God* till he pleaſe to come.

Thou

Thou oughtſt chiefly to humble thy ſelf, when thou feel'ſt little, or no devotion; and yet not be dejected, or grieve inordinately for it.

For, *God* gives often in a ſhort time, that which he hath long time denied; *he* gives ſometimes in the end, that which in the beginning of prayer *he* deferred to grant.

2. IF *grace* ſhould always be preſently given, and at hand ever with a will, it could not well be indured by a weak man.

The *Grace* therefore of devotion is to be expected with good hope, and humble patience.

Yet impute to thy ſelf and thy ſins, what is not given thee; or, when it is ſecretly taken from thee.

It is a ſmall matter, that ſometimes hinders, and hides *grace* from us; if it be to be called ſmall, and

not rather a great matter, that hindereth ſo great a good.

And, if thou remove this, be it great, or little, and perfectly overcome it, thou ſhalt have thy deſire.

3. FOR, as ſoon as thou giveſt thy ſelf with all thy heart to *God*, and ſeekeſt not this, or that, for thine own pleaſure and will, but intirely ſetleſt thy ſelf in *him*; thou ſhalt find thy ſelf united, and quiet: for nothing will taſte ſo well, and pleaſe thee ſo much, as the *good pleaſure of the Divine Will.*

Whoſoever therefore with a *ſimple heart*, directs his intentions to *God*, and purgeth himſelf from all inordinate love or diſlike of any creature, ſhall be moſt fit to receive *grace*, and worthy of the gift of devotion.

For, Our *Lord* beſtows his bleſſings there, where he finds empty veſſels:

veſſels: and how much more perfectly one renounceth baſe things, and dies more to himſelf through contempt of himſelf, ſo much more ſpeedily *grace* comes, and enters more plentifully, and elevates higher a free heart.

4. THEN *ſhall he ſee, abound, and wonder, and his heart ſhall be dilated in him, becauſe the hand of our Lord is with him, and he hath put himſelf into his hands for ever.*

Behold! So ſhall the man be bleſſed, who ſeeks *God* with his whole heart, and takes not his ſoul in vain.

This man deſerves great *grace* of *divine union* in receiving the holy *Euchariſt*, ſince he regards not his own devotion, and comfort; but the honour and glory of *God*.

Chap. XVI.

That we ought to manifest our necessities to Christ, and crave his grace.

The Voice of the Disciple.

1. O Most *sweet and loving Lord*, whom now I desire to receive devoutly, *Thou* knowest my infirmity and necessity which I suffer; with how great evils and sins I am oppressed, how often I am grieved, tempted, troubled, and defiled!

I come unto *thee* for remedy, I crave of thee comfort and ease.

I speak to him that knows all things, to whom all my interiour is manifest, and who can only perfectly comfort, and help me.

Thou knowest what they are above all things I stand in need of, & how poor I am in virtues.

2. Behold,

2. BEHOLD, I ſtand before *thee*, poor, and naked; calling for *grace*, and craving mercy.

Refreſh thy hungry beggar; give heat to my coldneſs, with the fire of *thy love*; give *light* to my blindneſs, with the brightneſs of *thy* preſence.

Turn all earthly things unto me into bitterneſs; all things grievous, and contrary, into patience; all baſe and created things, into contempt and oblivion.

Lift up my heart to *thee* into heaven, and ſuffer it not to wander upon earth.

Be *thou* only ſweet and delightſome to me, from henceforth for evermore.

For *thou* only art my meat, and my drink; my love, and my joy; my delight, and all my good.

3. O, that with thy preſence *thou*

wouldſt wholly inflame, burn, and change me into *thee*, that I might be made one *ſpirit* with *thee* through the *grace* of intern union, and the melting of burning love. 2 *Cor.* 6.

Suffer me not to go from *thee* hungry and dry; but deal mercifully with me, as *thou* haſt often dealt mercifully with thy Saints.

What marvail if I ſhould be wholly inflamed by *thee*, and die to my ſelf? ſince thou art *fire*, alwayes burning, and never decaying; *love*, purifying the heart, and inlightning the underſtanding.

CHAP. XVII.

Of the fervent love, and vehement affection to receive Chriſt.

The Voice of the Diſciple.

1. WITH great devotion, and burning *love*; with all fervour of *affection of heart*, I deſire to

to receive *thee*, *O Lord:* as many Saints, and devout persons have desired in receiving *thee*, who were most pleasing to *thee* through holiness of life, and ardent devotion.

O my God, my everlasting love, my whole good, my happiness without end; I would gladly receive *thee* with the most vehement desire, and worthy reverence, that any of the Saints ever had, or could feel.

2. AND, though I am unworthy to have all those feelings of devotion; yet I offer unto *thee* the whole affection of my *heart*, as if I alone had all those most gratefully inflamed desires.

Yea whatsoever also a most devout mind can conceive,, and desire; all that, with most high reverence, and *inward affection*, I present, and offer unto thee.

I desire to reserve nothing to my

ſelf, but freely and moſt willingly to ſacrifice my ſelf, and all mine, unto *thee*.

My *Lord God*, my *Creator*, and my *Redeemer*; I deſire to receive *thee* this day with ſuch *affection*, reverence, praiſe, and honour; with ſuch gratitude, worthineſs, and *love*; with ſuch faith, hope, and *purity*; as *thy moſt bleſſed Mother, the moſt glorious Virgin Mary* received and deſired *thee*, when ſhe humbly, and devoutly anſwered the Angel, who declared to her the myſtery of *thy Incarnation*, ſaying, *Behold the Handmaid of our Lord; let it be done unto me according to thy word.* Luk. 1.

3. AND, as *thy* bleſſed Forerunner, the moſt excellent among the Saints, *John the Baptiſt*, leaped chearfully with joy of the *Holy Ghoſt*, whilſt he was yet ſhut up in his

his mother's womb, and afterwards seeing JESUS walking among men, humbling himself very much, said with devout affection:

As the friend of the Bridegroom that stands, and hears him, rejoyceth with joy for the voice of the Bridegroom, Joh. 3. 2.

So I wish also to be inflamed with holy desires, and to offer my self up to *thee* with my whole heart.

And therefore I offer, and present unto *thee* the jubilations, ardent affections, mental excesses, supernatural illuminations, and heavenly visions of all devout hearts, with all the virtue and praises celebrated, and to be celebrated, by all creatures in heaven, and earth; for my self and all such as are commended to my prayers, that by all thou mayst be worthily praised, and glorified for ever.

4. RECEIVE my vows, *O my Lord God*, and desires of infinite praise and immense benediction, which are due to *thee*; according to the measure of thy unspeakable greatness.

These I yield, and desire to yield to *thee*, every day and moment; and do intreat, and invite all the heavenly *spirits*, and all thy faithful, with prayers and affections, to give thee thanks and praises together with me.

5. LET *all People, Tribes, and Tongues praise thee, and with high jubilation and ardent devotion magnifie thy holy and mellifluous Name.*

And let all who reverently, and devoutly celebrate *thy* most high *Sacrament*, and receive it with full *faith*, deserve to find *grace*, and mercy at thy hands, and pray humbly for me sinful creature.

And

And when they shall have obtained their desired devotion, and joyful union, and shall depart from thy sacred heavenly table well comforted, and marvelously refreshed; let them vouchsafe to remember my poor and needy soul.

CHAP. XVIII.

That a man be not a curious searcher of this Sacrament, but an humble follower of Christ, submitting his Sense unto Faith.

The Voyce of the Beloved.

1. THou ough'st to beware of curious, and unprofitable searching into this most profound *Sacrament*, if thou wilt not sink into the depth of doubt.

He that is a searcher of Majesty shall be oppressed by glory.

God

God is able to work more, than man can underſtand.

A pious, and humble inquiry of *truth* is tolerable, ſo he be always ready to be taught, and endeavour to walk in the ſound paths of the Ancient Fathers doctrine?

2. BLESSED is that ſimplicity, that forſakes the difficult way of queſtions, and goes on in the plain, and aſſured path of *God's* commandements.

Many have loſt devotion by ſearching after high things.

Faith, and ſincere Life, are exalted at *thy* hands; not, heighth of underſtanding, nor the depth of the Myſteries of *God*.

If thou doſt not underſtand nor conceive the things that are under thee, How ſhalt thou be able to comprehend things that are above thee?

Submit

Submit thy ſelf to *God*, and let thy ſenſe be ſubject to *faith*, and the light of knowledg ſhall be given thee in that degree, as ſhall be profitable and neceſſary for thee.

3. SOME are grievouſly tempted about Faith, and the *Sacrament*; but, that is not to be imputed to them, but rather to the Enemy.

Do not regard, or diſpute with thy thoughts, nor anſwer the doubts moved by the Devil; but believe the words of *God*, believe his Saints and Prophets, and the wicked Enemy will fly from thee.

It is oftentimes very profitable to the ſervants of *God*, to ſuffer ſuch things; for, he tempts not infidels, & ſinners, whom he already ſecurely poſſeſſeth, but he ſundry ways tempts, and vexeth the faithful and devout.

4. Go forward therefore with a ſincere, and undoubted faith; and come to the Sacrament with humble Reverence.

And whatſoever thou art not able to underſtand, commit ſecurely to Almighty *God*.

God deceives thee not, he is deceived that truſts too much to himſelf.

God walks with the *ſimple*, reveals himſelf to the humble, gives underſtanding to little-ones, opens the ſenſe to *pure* mindes, and hides *grace* from the curious, and proud.

Humane reaſon is weak, and may be deceived; but, true faith cannot be deceived.

All reaſon, and natural ſearch, ought to follow *faith*, not go before it, or impugn it.

For, *Faith* and *Love* do chiefly excel, and work in a hidden manner in this moſt bleſſed, and ſweet *Sacrament*. *God*

God, who is everlasting, and of infinite power, doth great, and insearchable things, in heaven and earth; and there is no searching his wonderful works.

If the works of *God*, were such as might be easily comprehended by human reason; they were not to be called Wonderful, and unspeakable.

FINIS.

A Table or Index of the Chapters contained in the four Books of the IMITATION OF CHRIST: written by the Venerable Man *John Gerſen*, Abbot, of the moſt Holy Order of *St. Benedict*.

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